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The Croall Lectures for 1898

RECENT ARCHÆOLOGY

AND

THE BIBLE

BY THE

REV. THOMAS NICOL, D.D.

MINISTER OF TOLBOOTH PARISH, EDINBURGH
AUTHOR OF 'RECENT EXPLORATIONS IN BIBLE LANDS'

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS
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PREFACE.

THE Lectures contained in this volume were delivered in the beginning of 1898, in terms of the appointment I had the honour to receive from the Croall Lectureship Trustees.

For that appointment I desire here to express my cordial thanks. The invitation of the Trustees has enabled me to extend former studies, and to present a survey of Biblical Archæology up to date; whilst their confidence has been an ever-present incentive to fulfil my task in a manner worthy of the traditions of the Lectureship.

My obligations to the works of scholars labouring in different departments of archæological research will be apparent to the readers of this volume. From those of them to whom I have had occasion to apply for information I have received most courteous replies. For however sharp the controversies of archæologists on questions in dispute among themselves, there is no lack of

readiness to communicate discoveries that have been made or results that have been attained. It is scarcely necessary to add that, while availing myself of the discoveries and results of these scholars, I have endeavoured always to form an independent judgment on points at issue between different schools.

Of friends who have helped me with the literature and with valuable suggestions, I have pleasure in mentioning Professor Hermann L. Strack of Berlin, Professor A. R. S. Kennedy of Edinburgh, and the Rev. H. G. Tomkins, Weston-super-Mare. This acknowledgment, however, must not be held as committing them to the views here adopted on disputed points.

To Miss Annie Pirie of Aberdeen, the daughter of one of my earliest and kindest friends, the late Principal of Aberdeen University, I have been greatly indebted for reading my proofs and furnishing me with valuable particulars relating to earliest Egypt, in regard to which her experience of exploration in connection with Professor Flinders Petrie's work has made her an authority. For reading the proofs of the Lectures devoted to Assyria, and for not a little valuable information, I have to thank Mr W. F. Millar, an honoured citizen who gives to Assyrian studies the leisure he can snatch from the avocations of a business life. And last, but not least, I have to acknow-

ledge much scholarly help from the Rev. W. R. Henderson, B.D., who has read all the proofs and also compiled the minute and accurate Index.

An Appendix has been added containing a few notes, mostly referring to discoveries or discussions since the delivery of the Lectures. It may help to explain allusions in footnotes if I mention that after the delivery of the Lectures I had the opportunity of making a tour of the Levant, visiting the fine collection of antiquities in the Louvre *en route*, and spending some time in the Egyptian National Museum at Ghizeh, and in the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Stamboul.

9 Chalmers Street, Edinburgh,
April 10, 1899.

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RECENT ARCHÆOLOGY AND THE BIBLE.

LECTURE I.

A SKETCH OF RECENT DISCOVERY IN PALESTINE, EGYPT, AND BABYLONIA.

Archæological discovery in the lands of the Bible has within the last two or three decades vastly enlarged the scope of ancient history, and added at many points a new context to the history of Israel. The explorations of recent years have recovered for us forgotten empires and vanished peoples, and have brought to light civilisations, literatures, and political institutions several millenniums old. They have made us familiar with details of domestic life in those neighbours of Israel whom they introduce to us, and they have revealed a culture and an art exhibiting a degree of advancement which is wonderful. It is not surprising, therefore, that they have contributed materials which have an important bearing upon the literature and the history of the Bible. It is well known that the labours of Schliemann and his coadjutors

on the plain of Troy have brought about a strong reaction against the sceptical conclusions of Wolf and his followers, and have done much to restore the credit of Homer as the author of the famous poems. Thanks to the discoveries that have added to the earliest Christian literature such treatises as the Diatessaron of Tatian, the Didache, and the so-called Gospel of Peter, and to the labours of New Testament scholars both in Britain and in Germany, the critical movement runs at the present time strongly in the direction of the traditional dates of almost all the New Testament books. And it is not too much to affirm that recent explorations in Bible lands have told similarly in favour of the Old Testament books and their historical character. The late knowledge of the art of writing, which has been alleged against the genuineness and veracity of the narratives of the early history of Israel, can no longer be maintained in the face of recent discoveries. Materials for accurate history are now shown to exist from a period much earlier than the call of Abraham. Episodes which seemed to the critics unhistorical have had their historical character placed beyond doubt. Apparent inconsistencies have been fully explained, and valuable confirmations have been given of the Scripture narrative by inscriptions supplementing it.

Archæology (it has been well said) more often supplements than confirms history. It either speaks when history is silent, or, if it speaks of the same person or event, it speaks in so different a relation and with so novel a voice that the historical imagination, tempered by severe criticism, must

be called into play before the real connection and harmony between the written history and the archæological evidence can be apprehended. But when this adjustment has taken place, when the whole of the evidence, monumental and literary, has been focussed, so to speak, upon the event or personage under discussion, the result is a vividness of realisation, a certainty of conviction, which no other means can attain.[1]

Of this we shall have illustrations again and again in the course of these Lectures, and we cannot be sufficiently thankful for the commentary supplied by the monuments to so much of the sacred writings.

It was a great achievement when from the mounds of Khorsabad, near the river Tigris, there was dug up rather more than fifty years ago the palace of Sargon, a great Assyrian monarch, the father of the better known Sennacherib, whose annals we now possess in unusual copiousness, but of whom the only trace left in the world's history for over two thousand years was Isaiah's allusion to him in a parenthesis, when referring to the siege of Ashdod (Isa. xx. 1). From Sargon of Assyria in the eighth century B.C. it is a long step backwards to Sargon of Accad, who flourished about 3800 B.C., and ruled an empire extending from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean. Only cautiously and with hesitation has that step been taken by the historian of antiquity; but now the existence and the exploits of Sargon of Accad are authenticated by scores of indubitable inscriptions, and a mace-head bearing his name is to be seen in

[1] See Percy Gardner, New Chapters in Greek History, chap. i.

the British Museum. The year 3800 B.C. brings us very near to 4004 B.C., the limit assigned to human history by the chronology of Archbishop Ussher. But within the present decade there have been dug up from the pestilential marshes of Babylonia inscribed remains carrying us some centuries farther into antiquity. These inscriptions record the annals of one of the greatest monarchs of the ancient East, whose very name—Lugal-zaggisi—is new to the modern world. This monarch lived centuries before Sargon of Accad, and acknowledges in a long inscription of more than a hundred lines, carved a hundred times on as many large vases, that Inlil, his god, "straightened his path from the Lower Sea of the Tigris and Euphrates to the Upper Sea (the Mediterranean), and granted him the dominion of everything, from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same." Even these inscriptions, dating from the fifth millennium before Christ, are not regarded as by any means the earliest written records of the ancient Babylonian civilisation, which can be traced back, it may be by uncertain steps, into "the palpable obscure" millenniums still. "I do not hesitate," says Professor Hilprecht,[1] "to date the founding of the temple of Bel and the first settlements in Nippur somewhere between 6000 and 7000 B.C., possibly even earlier. I cannot do better," he adds, "than repeat Haynes's own words, written out of the depths of this most ancient sanctuary of the world so far as known: 'We must cease to apply the adjective "earliest" to the time

[1] The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, vol. i. part ii. p. 24.

of Sargon, or to any age or epoch within a thousand years of his advanced civilisation.'" These recent discoveries "have shown us," says Professor Peters,[1] the Director of the University of Pennsylvania Expedition, "that man in a high state of civilisation—building cities, organising states, conducting distant expeditions for conquest, ruling widely extended countries, trafficking with remote lands—existed in Babylonia two thousand years before the period assigned by Archbishop Ussher's Chronology for the Creation of the World." One has only to read Mr George Smith's 'Assyrian Discoveries,' published in 1875, especially the chapter on "Early Babylonian Texts," with its tentative identifications of old Babylonian kings, along with Professor Hilprecht's dissertations on the *Cuneiform Texts* found at Nippur, to see what a flood of light has been thrown upon earliest Babylonia in the last twenty years.

As those Babylonian records reveal a full-grown civilisation with writing already in wonderful perfection, — with art well advanced, with politics and religion highly developed, so it is in Egypt. Egyptian civilisation, to judge from the testimony of the monuments, has, according to Professor Sayce, neither childhood nor youth. Egyptian history runs back into an antiquity scarcely less venerable than that of Babylonia. We have been accustomed to think we are upon solid ground with the commencement of the 4th dynasty, about 4000 B.C., which is the age of the Pyramid builders. But now there has come the remarkable announcement,

[1] Nippur, vol. i. p. vii.

positively startling when first made, that the royal tomb found in the spring of 1897 at Negada, near Thebes, by M. de Morgan, is the tomb of King Menes, the founder of the 1st dynasty of Egyptian kings. As if to confound the incredulity of those who accounted Menes and his successors of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd dynasties mythical and unhistorical, the calcined remains of Menes were discovered in the tomb with many objects artistically finished, including the broken pieces of an ivory plaque, which, when joined, showed the Horus name of the Pharaoh, and alongside of it the name of Menes, borne by him during his lifetime. To witness for his historical character we have now, from the middle of the fifth millennium before Christ, the tomb, the bones, and the seal of Menes, who even at that early date styles himself the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, and does so in hieroglyphic writing already fully developed.[1]

It is true that over this vastly enlarged domain of ancient history there still hang shadows dark and deep, and at many points impenetrable. But in so far as archæological research has drawn back the veil from the civilisation of most ancient Babylonia and Egypt, it has made known to us, through hieroglyphic and cuneiform, the cities and temples, the rulers and peoples of lands intimately associated with Israel. God's chosen people having their roots in Babylonia, and receiving the impress of Egypt at the birth of their national life, exhibit in their history ineffaceable traces of Babylonian and Egyptian influence.

[1] See Appendix, Note I., p. 318.

Bible lands [it has been well said][1] are the arena upon which the God of history, of providence, and of redemption specially displayed His power and grace. The great primary revelation of His dealings with men is embodied in the Hebrew literature. These Bible lands have yielded to us a secondary revelation. It is subordinate, indeed, to the first, but it is richly supplementary and illustrative. It is the province of Oriental archæology to deal with the peoples and countries and languages of the Bible, so as to bring out their true relation to Bible teaching. They were formerly regarded as the mere framework of the picture. Now we are learning that they make up its groundwork, its colouring, and its perspective.

We can see this the moment we grasp the position of Israel among the nations. The little land of Canaan, between the Mediterranean and the Desert, was on the highway between Egypt and the empires of the Tigris and Euphrates. Lugal-zaggisi and Sargon of Accad may have reached it when they led their conquering hosts to the shores of the Great Sea. Thothmes I. and Thothmes III., who are among the greatest of Egyptian monarchs, swept across it when they in turn carried their arms to the banks of the Euphrates. Babylonian, Assyrian, and Egyptian history, recovered and reconstructed from original and authentic sources by the labours of explorers and philologists and historians, is, accordingly, found to elucidate in a variety of ways the incidents and personages made known to us in Holy Writ.

It is only of a small part of these elucidations that we can take notice in a course like this. Naturally we shall select for exposition and dis-

[1] Professor M'Curdy in 'Recent Research in Bible Lands,' pp. 4, 5.

cussion the passages of the history that appear the most important—the early narratives of the Book of Genesis; the times of Abraham; the residence of Israel in Egypt, and the Exodus; the condition of Canaan when the Israelites took possession of it; the earlier times of the Hebrew monarchy; and the Assyrian and Chaldean invasions, ending in the exile. But as no account of recent archæology in Bible lands would be complete without some notice of Palestine exploration, and fruitful discovery in Asia Minor and other parts of the Turkish empire, we shall devote a concluding Lecture to them.

It is necessary, however, to indicate the sources of our materials, and to show by what labour and learning and courageous and patient research the science of Sacred Archæology has been built up to the position which it occupies to-day.

In sketching the history of exploration, there are, speaking generally, three great fields—Palestine, Egypt, and Babylonia and Assyria, which two we count as one.

I. PALESTINE EXPLORATION.

It will be convenient to give Palestine exploration the first place in such a sketch. It received its initial impulse from the researches of the well-known American Bible scholar, Dr Edward Robinson. He began his work in 1838, and soon startled Bible students by his remarkable discoveries. The Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews, of which the Rev. R. M. M'Cheyne and Dr Andrew A. Bonar were members, excited

no little curiosity in Palestine among Scottish Christians. Dean Stanley, by his fascinating book 'Sinai and Palestine,' awakened the interest of the English public in the science of Sacred Archæology; and the accomplished American missionary, Dr W. M. Thomson, who died only a few years ago, by his great work, 'The Land and the Book,' deepened the interest already created. In 1865 the Palestine Exploration Fund was instituted. Its prospectus bore that it was founded for the accurate and systematic investigation of the archæology, topography, geology, physical geography, natural history, and manners and customs of the Holy Land for Biblical illustration. The Society thus formed has been admirably served by a succession of Engineer officers, who have been as highly distinguished in the service of the Queen as in the cause of Bible Archæology. One has only to name Sir Charles Wilson, Sir Charles Warren, Colonel Conder, and the present Sirdar of the Egyptian army, Lord Kitchener, the first steps of whose singularly brilliant career were taken in the Survey of Galilee and Western Palestine for the Palestine Exploration Fund.[1] The Fund has been equally fortunate in its other officials, and the Honorary Secretary, Sir Walter Besant, so well known in literature, has done the cause signal service. In 1866 the first expedition was sent out under Captain Wilson, R.E., now Sir Charles Wilson, and Lieutenant Anderson, R.E., who recommended the commencement of excavations at Jerusalem. In 1867,

[1] See 'The City and the Land,' pp. 104, 105.

Lieutenant Warren, R.E., began work, the difficulties of which he has so well described in his 'Underground Jerusalem' and 'The Recovery of Jerusalem.' In 1868-69 the survey of Sinai was conducted by Major H. S. Palmer, R.E., and Captain Wilson. They were accompanied by the brilliant Arabic scholar, the late Professor E. H. Palmer, whose 'Desert of the Exodus' is the best known monument of the expedition. The survey of Western Palestine was begun in 1872, and occupied some seven years, being carried through with remarkable ability and thoroughness by Lieutenant Conder and Lieutenant Kitchener. It is no disparagement of the other departments of the work to say that the survey of Western Palestine is the chief achievement of the Fund. It has given us a map of Western Palestine, on the scale of one inch to the mile, beautifully and accurately executed, with every road and ruin marked, and every conspicuous object filled in; with hills and mountain-ranges correctly delineated and shaded; with the rivers and brooks all running in the right direction; with vineyards, springs, and clumps of trees in their proper places; and thousands of names that never appeared on a Palestine map before.[1] As far as Western Palestine is concerned, we are assured that the limit of identification by measurement and examination of the surface has now been virtually reached. The survey of Eastern Palestine was attempted in 1881 by Colonel Conder, who was stopped, however, by

[1] Cf. 'Our Work in Palestine' (Bentley and Son), 1873; 'Twenty-one Years' Work in Palestine,' both by Sir Walter Besant. Also Conder's 'Tent Work in Palestine' and 'The Bible and Modern Discoveries,' by H. A. Harper (Alexander P. Watt), 1891.

the Turkish Government, though not before he had by coolness and tact got over a considerable amount of ground. Since then, the outstanding events in the operations of the Fund have been the exploration and recovery of the ancient Lachish at Tel el-Hesy, eighteen miles north-east of Gaza, by Professor Flinders Petrie (1890) and Dr F. J. Bliss (1891), and the prosecution of excavations at Jerusalem under the superintendence of Dr Bliss and Mr A. C. Dickie (1894-97).

While these organised and systematic efforts have been made under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund, the labours of individual workers are not to be overlooked. Canon Tristram has done great service by investigating the natural history, and by his admirable book, 'The Land of Israel.' Professor Hull, with a geological expedition, in 1883 surveyed the Wady Arabah and the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, setting forth his results in a valuable report. Scotland has been represented in the work of Palestine research by Professor George Adam Smith, of Glasgow, who studied and travelled in the Holy Land in 1880, and again in 1892, and whose masterly work on the 'Historical Geography of the Holy Land' is the highest authority on the subject.[1]

Nor must the work of other Societies be forgotten. The American Society for Palestine Exploration, instituted in 1870, obtained valuable results under the superintendence of Dr Selah Merrill, for several years American Consul at Jerusalem, in the danger-

[1] For an excellent *vidimus* of what has been accomplished by recent workers, see Dr G. A. Smith's Preface.

ous field east of the Jordan. The Society withdrew from that field in 1881, but Dr Merrill's book, 'East of the Jordan,' remains an authority on that region. The same author's 'Galilee in the Time of Christ' deserves equal praise. The German Palestine Society, containing Professors Socin and Guthe in its membership, has laboured with no little perseverance and success for many years, the results being published in its Quarterly Journal, and more recently in its Communications.[1] Its interest has mainly been around Jerusalem, where the architect Schick has done good service; and east of the Jordan, where Wetzstein and Schumacher have examined extensive tracts of country.

It has to be admitted, however, that neither in Jerusalem, nor in Palestine generally, have inscribed remains of any great antiquity been as yet discovered. Its monuments thus far have vastly more to tell of Roman, Early Christian, and Saracenic and Crusading times than of the times of Patriarch and Prophet. Of these the most interesting, perhaps, is the inscribed stone from Herod's temple, in Greek letters, forbidding strangers to enter the temple enclosure under pain of death. It contains word for word the warning quoted by Josephus, and it is the only stone of which we can be sure that it stood in its position when our Lord visited the temple. It was discovered by M. Clermont Ganneau, and is now to be seen in the Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople. When we add the Moabite Stone of the time of Ahab,

[1] *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palaestina-Vereins* herausgegeben von Prof. D. Hermann Guthe, Leipzig, und *Mittheilungen des D.P.V.*

the Siloam Inscription of the time of Hezekiah, and the solitary cuneiform tablet found at Lachish, supplementing the famous Tel el-Amarna correspondence, we have mentioned the chief inscriptions casting light upon the history of Israel in Canaan. And yet who can tell but that by happy chance, or, more likely, by further systematic digging into the soil, the Tels with which the land abounds may some day yield up records of the past further to illustrate and supplement the Bible history? What discoveries, for example, might not be made at Kiriath-Sepher—the Book-town of the Old Testament—if only its site were identified? Its revelations might cast Lachish or even Tel el-Amarna into the shade.

II. EGYPTIAN EXPLORATION.

Ever since the brief French occupation of Egypt in the days of Napoleon, its mummies and monuments, its obelisks and temples, its papyri and clay-tablets have been objects of learned research and popular interest in France, Germany, and Britain. It was the discovery of the famous Rosetta Stone in 1799 which gave the first definite impulse to Egyptology. The stone, which bears the threefold inscription fraught with the birth of a new science, is a slab of black basalt, and though discovered by a French artillery officer near the Rosetta mouth of the Nile, has found its resting-place in the British Museum. It stands 45 inches high, is $28\frac{1}{2}$ inches broad, and 11 inches thick. It is inscribed with fourteen lines of hieroglyphics occupying the upper

part, thirty-two lines of demotic writing in the middle, and fifty-four lines of Greek covering the lower portion of the stone. These different texts give two different versions of a decree of the Egyptian priesthood, promulgated in honour of Ptolemy V. (Epiphanes), king of Egypt about 198 B.C. The Greek is believed to be the original, and the hieroglyphic and demotic a rendering of it. These different texts have been edited, translated, and annotated, till now a large literature has grown up round the famous stone. And little wonder, seeing that it has furnished the key to the decipherment of those hieroglyphics which had been for generations the puzzle of the learned world. For thousands of years, from the earliest dawn of Egyptian history down to the third century of our era, when it was still employed for religious purposes, the hieroglyphic character had been the medium for the transmission of thought among the Egyptians. At last it fell into disuse, and its secret perished.

With reviving knowledge and interest the hieroglyphic inscriptions excited the curiosity of the learned, and the theories propounded as to their contents were legion. The learned Englishman, Dr Thomas Young, and the brilliant Frenchman, Champollion, divide between them, in proportions not quite settled by their respective nationalities, the honour of having recovered the lost key. It is, however, Champollion's 'Grammaire Egyptienne' that has been the real foundation of successful study of the hieroglyphic characters. Now the Egyptian alphabet is fully agreed upon by Egypt-

ologists, and Egyptian texts, though they cannot be read with the same certainty as a play of Sophocles or a page of Livy, are year by year being mastered more fully by scholars. Champollion has had among his own countrymen eminent followers not only in Egyptian philology but also in exploration and historical research. Vicomte de Rougé, Chabas, Mariette, Maspéro, and De Morgan may be named without invidiousness; while Edouard Naville, though Swiss by nationality, has made valuable contributions to Egyptology by his discoveries at Pithom and elsewhere in the Delta. Germany is worthily represented in this field by Bunsen, Lepsius, Brugsch, Erman, Ebers, Wiedemann, and others. Nor have the countrymen of Thomas Young been behind. Wilkinson, Birch, R. S. Poole, Page Le Renouf, Miss A. B. Edwards, and Professor Flinders Petrie have done a large amount of original work of the highest order. Mention should be made of the French Archæological Mission and the Egypt Exploration Fund. The latter was instituted in 1883, and in each of the past fifteen winters has sent out skilled explorers like Naville and Flinders Petrie to conduct systematic excavations, the season's results being recorded in an Annual Volume. The most notable discoveries of the Fund are the identification of Pithom, one of the "store cities" of Exodus i., and of Naucratis, the earliest centre of Greek influence in the Delta. Among the most interesting of recent finds are the Λόγια Ἰησοῦ, or "Sayings of Jesus," from an early Greek papyrus discovered on the edge of the

Libyan Desert at Oxyrhynchus.[1] To recount and appraise the various contributions of the workers and scholars named is beyond our present scope, and we must be content to refer to two or three of the outstanding discoveries made in the soil of Egypt within the last twenty years.

1. In order of time, if not of importance, is the discovery of the Mummies of the Kings. It is this discovery which has made us familiar with the very face and features of the mightiest of the Egyptian kings. The story belongs to the romance of archæology. For a number of years the officials of the National Museum at Cairo had seen funeral offerings and other antiquities brought from Thebes by returning tourists, which they knew to have belonged to the dynasty of Rameses II., of his father Seti, and of his grandfather Rameses I. Even scarabs bearing the cartouche of Rameses II. had been displayed by innocent purchasers. It became obvious to the experienced officials of the Museum that the mummies of those royal personages, which had long been missing from their original burying-place, had at last been found. M. Maspéro, the Director-General of the Museum, at once set agencies to work to discover the possessor of the secret. Partly by the bastinado, and partly by bakhshish, he succeeded. An Arab, one of four brothers who had made the lucky find and enriched themselves by the plunder of the burying-place, at last gave up the secret. The task of taking possession of the precious relics was committed to Emil Brugsch

[1] See 'Λόγια Ἰησοῦ, Sayings of our Lord,' by B. P. Grenfell, M.A., and Arthur S. Hunt.

Bey, a brother of the famous Egyptologist; and in an almost inaccessible tomb, completely hidden away among the rocks of Deir-el-Bahri, there were found some forty mummies of kings, queens, princesses, and priests belonging to the 18th, 19th, and 21st dynasties. It is a gruesome story how they came to be found as they were and where they were. They had been treated with little more ceremony than the disinterred and dishonoured bodies of the martyrs of the Covenanting killing-time before they were allowed to occupy their "resting graves." Their original resting-place had been rifled by thieves, and as far back as the 21st dynasty the sacrilege had been discovered and efforts made to put things right. In this process corpses were put into the wrong coffins, damaged corpses were carelessly restored, and some that were wanting were personated by made-up mummies. The supposititious corpse of a daughter of King Aahmes was made up of linen swathings, a broken coffin-lid doing duty for the body, the whole wrapped round with mummy-cloths to give the appearance of a corpse, and then laid to rest in the coffin originally destined for the princess.[1]

Among the mummies discovered in 1881 were Aahmes I., the founder of the 18th dynasty, who, about 1582 B.C., expelled the Hyksos or Shepherd Kings, and gave back to Egypt the rule of her native princes; Thothmes I., Thothmes II., and Thothmes III. of the same dynasty, the last-named perhaps the mightiest of all the rulers of Egypt, who reigned fifty-four years, and in thirteen

[1] Wiedemann, Geschichte von Alt-Aegypten, pp. 112, 113.

campaigns subdued the leading peoples of Western Asia as far as the Euphrates, imposing tribute upon Cyprus and even upon distant Ethiopia. Never was the vanity of human greatness more impressively proclaimed than when this great monarch and conqueror, the Alexander of Egyptian history, who lived two hundred years before the time of Moses, was being set free from his swathings. His mummy was the first to be unrolled, and no sooner had his features been photographed than the entire form of the mighty Pharaoh crumbled into dust.[1] That was in 1881, shortly after the mummies had been placed in the National Museum; but it was not till 1886 that the remainder were unrolled. Further discoveries were made in 1891, the mummies in this instance being those of priestly and official personages, numbering 163, and belonging to the 19th, 20th, and 21st dynasties. The whole discovery has proved most instructive; for now they have become familiar to us through photographs and engravings—Seti I., in all probability the king who knew not Joseph; his son Rameses II., the Sesostris of the Greeks and the oppressor of Israel, who had the longest reign of any monarch of antiquity; and

[1] This statement may seem inconsistent with the fact that Thothmes III. is still to be seen in the Ghizeh Museum. My notes, taken March 22, 1898, are: "1179, Thothmes III. not collapsed as is said; upper lip projecting; front teeth still whole; mouth slightly open; chest looks as if it had given way." From inquiries I have made I gather that comparatively recently the mummy of Thothmes III. was re-examined, and the upper portion of the figure being fairly sound, the countenance having been protected by a mask of bitumen, that portion has been preserved. The mask has been removed, and what is now to be seen is the countenance of Thothmes III., although the trunk tumbled to pieces as recorded.

other exalted personages whose forms, touched though they be by decay, give a wonderful air of reality to the times of Moses three-and-thirty centuries ago.[1]

Egypt [as Maspéro says] is truly a land of marvels. It has not only like Assyria and Chaldæa, Greece and Italy, preserved for us monuments by which its historic past may be reconstructed, but it has handed on to us the men themselves who set up the monuments and made the history. Her great monarchs are not any longer mere names, deprived of appropriate forms, and floating colourless and shapeless in the imagination of posterity: they may be weighed, touched, and measured; the capacity of their brains may be gauged; the curve of their noses and the cut of their mouths may be determined. We know if they were bald, or if they suffered from some secret infirmity; and as we are able to do in the case of our contemporaries, we may publish their portraits taken first hand in the photographic camera.[2]

To the events of the Bible history in which they figured we shall direct attention again.[3]

2. Less striking to the popular imagination, but more fruitful and far-reaching in its results for the Bible history, was the discovery of Clay Tablets at Tel el-Amarna. Tel el-Amarna is a place of ruins

[1] We can still discern through the crumbling frames of those old Pharaohs the general character of their physique. Aahmes I., whose arm looks dislocated, must have had a figure tall but slim. The long taper fingers of Seti I., whose hands are crossed over the breast, at once attract attention. Rameses III. is marked by a shorter face and broader jaws. Even more remarkable is the resemblance still traceable in several instances. Between Seti I. and Rameses II. there is a marked resemblance—the nose, the mouth, the chin, in fact all the features, are the same, only in the father more refined and more intellectual than in the son.

[2] Struggle of the Nations, pp. 771, 772.

[3] See Appendix, Note II., p. 320.

about 180 miles south of Cairo, on the eastern bank of the Nile. In the winter of 1887 a peasant woman, searching among the ruins for antiquities to sell to tourists, turned over a clay tablet inscribed, not with Egyptian hieroglyphics, but with the cuneiform characters of Babylonia. In course of time three hundred and twenty such tablets were discovered, others having been destroyed before their value was realised, and those that were saved being in many cases seriously injured. As the ruins of Tel el-Amarna were known to cover the site of the ancient capital of Amenophis IV. of the 18th dynasty, in the century before the Exodus, a discovery of inscribed tablets there was hailed as an event of peculiar significance. This king, Amenophis IV., or Khu-en-Aten, the so-called heretic king of Egypt, was the son of Amenophis III. by a Syrian princess, Teie, the daughter of the King of Mitanni, the Aram-Naharaim of the Bible, of which, we are told, Chushan-Rishathaim was king a century or two later. Amenophis III. is known to us through the two majestic sitting statues which he set up before the temple built by him at Thebes —statues still standing, and renowned in antiquity as the Memnon Colossi, one of which gave forth musical sounds as the first rays of the rising sun struck upon it. On his accession to the throne Amenophis IV. professed himself a convert to the Asiatic form of sun-worship, the Aten worship. His rejection of the Amen worship and his iconoclasm brought about a rupture between him and the powerful priesthood of Thebes, and Khu-en-Aten eventually left his ancestral capital and built for

himself a new capital, the site of which is now covered by the mounds of Tel el-Amarna. To his new capital he carried the archives of the kingdom, and the famous tablets were a portion of those documents of state. The ruins have been thoroughly explored by Professor Flinders Petrie. A tombstone found in them has preserved the names of some of the principal officials who took part in the building of the city. The royal palace, the Sun Temple, the temple of Aten, and roads wide enough for two or three chariots to run abreast, have been laid bare. Besides the cuneiform writing many traces of foreign influence have been discovered—Ægean pottery, Asiatic sculptures, and, most remarkable of all, the features of officials on bas-reliefs, whose difference of race is not hidden by their Egyptian costume. Everything betokened the actual state of the case—a foreign court and half-foreign king, under the control of a foreign queen-dowager. Among the objects discovered in the ruins was what is believed to be the death-mask of the royal founder of the city, which was found in the house of the embalmer, and had no doubt been taken immediately after death. It is now to be seen in the Flinders Petrie collection of Egyptian antiquities in University College, London.

The interest of the discovery, however, centres in the tablets themselves, which have been secured in part by the British Museum, and in part by the museums of Cairo and Berlin. They have now been carefully deciphered and edited, and Winckler's edition of them complete is accompanied by

a translation. They are a remarkable series of documents of state, the royal and official correspondence between the Court of Egypt and northern kings in alliance with Egypt, and governors of Asiatic provinces which had been conquered by Thothmes III. more than two hundred years before. The series of letters from Ebed-tob, the Egyptian governor of Jerusalem, forms perhaps the most remarkable part of the collection. For Egyptian history they are of the highest value, and as they have shed light upon a period over which the shadows hung peculiarly dark and deep, they have simply revolutionised our ideas of the politics and the civilisation of Western Asia, including Palestine, in the second millennium before Christ. To the contents of the letters we shall return.

There are two significant facts to be noted. The one is the vast extent of the empire of Egypt in the reign of Amenophis III.[1] The other is the prevalence at that period of Babylonian influence, and especially of Babylonian culture, from the Persian Gulf to Upper Egypt, and over all the interval between. The kings and governors who write to

[1] Professor Flinders Petrie says ('Syria and Egypt from the Tell el Amarna Letters,' p. 21, f.) that "Amenhotep III., either by conquest or by treaty, had extended even the empire which had been acquired by Tahutmes I. and III. The whole Euphrates appears to be subject to him, down to 31° N., the Tigris up to Assyria and Arrapakhitis, and the Palmyra desert between Syria and Mesopotamia. This shows apparently the greatest extent of the Egyptian power ever known. In classical terms it comprised the whole of Syria, Mesopotamia, Chaldæa, and Assyria, stopping only at the frontiers of Susiana, Media, and Armenia. At no period, therefore, can we place the power of Egypt higher than it was under Amenhotep III., lord of the two great cradles of civilisation, the narrow valley of the Nile and the plains and highlands of Mesopotamia.

Amenophis III. and his son, Amenophis IV., write not in their own vernacular—Hebrew, or Canaanite, or Syrian—nor yet in Egyptian hieroglyphics, the language of their suzerain, but in the language and in the written character of Babylonia, a thousand miles at least from the nearest point of contact of the writers. One thinks of the prevalence of French as the language of diplomacy, and of Latin as the language of the Church, better still perhaps of the Romanised character in which the Scriptures are now being printed for the natives of India and Japan, as modern parallels to that far-spreading Babylonian script. There are at least three of the Tel el-Amarna letters written in cuneiform, the language of which is as yet unknown, although in one case it is believed to be Hittite. The explanation of it all has been well stated as follows :—

That the Babylonians had once and up to a comparatively recent period occupied the whole of the habitable territory as far as the Mediterranean and the River of Egypt; that the period of their occupation was very long and scarcely intermittent; that their influence extended to the minutest details of business and social life; and that their language and literature formed a liberal education for all the cultivated classes in Western Asia. For the foreign language could only have been used by so many persons, widely removed from one another, when the teaching and learning of the language came as a matter of course from the constant associations of daily life and the indelible impressions of permanent institutions. . . . The revelation given in Babylonian language from the very soil of Egypt itself by the Tel el-Amarna tablets shows that the same relative position was held, back to the earliest recorded time. The western expeditions and conquests of Sargon of Accad and

Naram-Sin, nearly 4000 B.C., are no mere legend; the commercial activity of their successors of Southern Babylonia from the forests of Northern Syria to the Sinaitic Peninsula are now seen in the light of their enduring results; the story of Genesis xiv. is no narrative of isolated events, but the fragmentary commemoration of enterprises which were for many centuries the order of the day. We are learning more clearly as each year of discovery goes by that what the Greeks and Romans were as civilisers and conquerors to the world we still call ancient, the Babylonians were to countries and peoples of an antiquity immeasurably more remote.[1]

3. A very remarkable discovery was made by Professor Flinders Petrie, in the season 1895-96, of an Egyptian stele bearing an inscription containing the name of Israel. Though much has been done by explorers and travellers to settle the route of the Exodus and the chief sites connected with the residence of the children of Israel in Egypt, there had been up to the spring of 1896 absolutely no direct mention of Israel found on any Egyptian monument. The stele now discovered has a history of its own. It is a splendid slab of black syenite, penetrated with quartz veins, which had been selected by Amenophis III. to be set up in his funereal temple with a copious account of his religious benefactions inscribed upon it. It stood $10\frac{1}{4}$ feet high, was 5 feet 4 inches wide, and had a thickness of 13 inches.

It is [says Professor Petrie] the largest stele of igneous rock known, and was polished like glass on its exquisitely flat faces. The religious change of Amenhotep IV. led to

[1] History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, by J. F. M'Curdy, vol. i. pp. 185, 186.

his erasing the figure of the god Amen and nearly all the inscription. But Seti I. piously re-engraved both the scene and the inscription, and added that "the restoration of the monument was made by Maat-men-ra (Seti) for his father Amen." This noble block Merenptah stole and re-used: the face of it was set into a wall, and the back of it thus shown was engraved with a scene and a long historical inscription of Merenptah. It was afterwards overthrown on the destruction of the temple, and lay flat on the ground without any damage but one small chip. The amount of inscription on it is almost without precedent. . . . The condition of it is perfect: not a single sign defaced or injured; the scenes are complete, the faces of the figures as fresh as when cut, and the painting on the scene of Merenptah is as bright as if laid on yesterday.[1]

The interest, and, we may say, the puzzle of the inscription will be understood when it is remembered that Merenptah is generally believed to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus. The inscription is dated the fifth year of his reign, and is a hymn of victory finishing up with a glorification of his might:—

"The princes are stretched on the ground and present their homage:
No one among the nine peoples using the bow lifts up the head.
Wasted is Thnw [Libya];
Cheta is laid to rest;
Canaan is captured with all his tribes.
Led forth is Askelon;
Gezer taken;
Jenoam is brought to nought.
Israel is laid waste and his states annihilated.
Chor is made as the widows of Egypt.
All lands together are in peace."

[1] 'Contemporary Review,' May 1896. See also the 'Century Magazine,' August 1896, "Pharaoh of the Hard Heart," by Prof. Flinders Petrie.

Such is one of the most authoritative translations of this remarkable inscription; the bearing of it upon Israel in Egypt must be reserved for further discussion.

4. The most recent discovery in Egypt, the finding of the tomb and the remains and the seal of Menes, in November 1897, has been already referred to. The discovery has been confirmed by the most recent research, and as the names of several kings belonging to the three first dynasties, preserved to us by the old historian Manetho, have been already found by De Morgan and Amélineau, there is no reason to doubt that now the world has come into possession of distinct and definite traces of the first Egyptian king.[1]

III. BABYLONIAN EXPLORATION.

Babylonia came early into prominence as a centre of modern archæological discovery, and its soil is still yielding treasures of inestimable value. With Babylonia we are accustomed to associate Assyria, and it may be well here in a word or two to define the position both geographically and chronologically of these two ancient empires. Babylonia proper is the territory enclosed by the lower Euphrates and Tigris, extending from the neighbourhood of modern Baghdad, where the two rivers approach to within twenty-two miles of each other and run for a time an almost parallel course, to the confluence of the two about sixty-five miles before they fall into the Persian Gulf. Lying as it did between the

[1] See Appendix, Note I., p. 318.

Euphrates and the Tigris, and intersected by a magnificent system of canals, Babylonia in natural fruitfulness was as fertile as Egypt, "the gift of the Nile." Assyria proper, taking its name from Assur, the old capital of the kingdom, was a compact little territory on the upper part of the middle Tigris, resting upon the lower Zab as its southern boundary, and extending northwards to the mountains of Kurdistan. Favoured by a delightful climate and irrigated by the numerous tributaries of the Tigris, Assyria enjoyed a fertility and a productiveness which well entitled Sennacherib's ambassador to describe it to the inhabitants of Jerusalem as "a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey" (2 Kings xviii. 32).

The Babylonian Empire, at a very early period, and again as late as the time of Nebuchadnezzar, extended far beyond the boundaries of Babylonia proper. Assyria, too, in the palmiest days of the empire, included Babylonia, and extended westward as far as the Mediterranean. The Semitic *régime* in Babylonia is estimated to have lasted at least four thousand years. The first great period of that *régime* shows us different cities successively in the south and in the north dominating the rest and taking the lead. The second period shows Babylon supreme. This supremacy, to adopt Professor M'Curdy's statement,[1] may be presented in four periods or stages: (1) A period when Babylonia was separate and independent; (2) a series of subjugations by foreign non-Semitic

[1] History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, p. 86 ff.

tribes; (3) next a long term of rivalry with Assyria, ending in the subjection of Babylon; (4) finally, a brief term of unparalleled power and splendour under the new empire of the Chaldæans, giving place to the conquest of Cyrus, an event which at the same time abolished the rule and *rôle* of the Northern Semites, the Assyrians. In the course of the history Assur and Nineveh, Accad and Babylon, Erech and Ur, Larsa and Eridu, Lagash and Nippur, and other mighty cities, flourished and were centres of political power, advanced civilisation, and highly developed religious worship. In them Lugal-zaggisi, Sargon of Accad, Khammurabi, Tiglath-Pileser, Sargon of Assyria, Sennacherib, Asshurbanipal, Nebuchadnezzar, and other powerful kings, had set up their thrones, going forth to the conquest of distant lands, and bringing back again in triumph the spoils of conquered peoples. But what had become of those mighty cities that were once the terror or the refuge of half the world? Where indeed were their ancient sites? They had so completely disappeared from the face of the earth that their ruins were unknown, and their very sites were in dispute. Take Nineveh for a typical example. Xenophon, as he crossed the ruins of Nineveh with his Ten Thousand, tells us only that there stood there a great and uninhabited city, Larissa, formerly tenanted by the Medes. Lucian speaks of Nineveh as a city so completely destroyed that its very ruins had disappeared. And little more than fifty years ago, had any historian or geographer been asked what he knew for certain of Nineveh, or Babylon, or any of the cities between the Tigris and the Euphrates,

his answer, if derived from sources outside the Bible, would have been vague and short indeed. Up to 1842 it could still be said that "a case three feet square enclosed all that remained, not only of the great city Nineveh, but of Babylon itself." The resurrection of those mighty cities, with their checkered history, their ancient and advanced civilisation, and their highly developed political and religious systems, from the dust of five or six millenniums, is unquestionably one of the grandest triumphs of modern science. We have only a few pages in which to tell the story.

Such as it was, that caseful of remains in the British Museum awakened the keenest interest among European scholars. Cuneiform inscriptions had been found up to this time only in the palace of Persepolis and in the tombs of the ancient Persian kings; but they were too few to afford much hope of the solution of the riddle they presented to scholars. In 1842 Emil Botta was appointed to Mosul, on the Tigris, by the French Government as their consular agent. He had heard of the inscriptions that had been found on the banks of the Tigris, and he set out for the East fired by the ambition to discover the remains of ancient Nineveh. His first attempts at excavation were without any result to speak of. He had already begun to despair of success when a peasant from Khorsabad, twelve miles to the north of Mosul, informed him of rubbish mounds where sculptured slabs could be found in any quantity. Thither he went in the early months of 1843 to make, as he thought, a last attempt. The very first trench dug by his

labourers brought to light a wall lined with sculptured slabs, and ere long the hill on which Khorsabad stands was found to be an artificially raised platform sustaining a building of magnificent proportions. The name of the builder, found on the bricks, declared the building to be the palace of Sargon, who planted the capital of his empire and fixed his royal residence at Dur-Sargina, on the ruins of which Khorsabad had been built. The delighted explorer found himself carried back, as by the waving of a conjurer's wand, two and a half millenniums to the palace from which this forgotten monarch in his day ruled half the world. There, in the sculptures recovered from the dust of over two thousand years, was the awe-inspiring form of the Assyrian conqueror on his throne or in his war-chariot; there were his vassals paying him homage; there were his victims in war or in the chase; there were his guests at the royal banquet; there were the gods of Assyria and their priests—all so life-like as to be a perfect revelation of the life and activity of the ancient world. After endless difficulties and hindrances Botta was able to have the sculptures transported to Europe, and they are now among the treasures of the Louvre in Paris. The further exploration of the palace of Sargon was carried out by Botta's successor at Mosul, Victor Place, an architect by profession. The professional skill of Place was of the greatest moment in ascertaining the general plan of the great building and in securing drawings of its details. One carefully protected apartment, in which were found a number of jars, partly broken, partly complete, turned out

to be Sargon's wine-cellar, which more than five-and-twenty centuries ago had been filled with purple wine for the king and his royal guests.

Meanwhile a greater explorer had entered the field. When travelling in Asia Minor and Syria in 1839-40, Mr Austin Henry Layard (the late Right Honourable Sir Austin Henry Layard) was seized with the ambition to visit the ruins of the capitals of the old Assyrian and Babylonian empires. Reaching Mosul in 1840, he inspected the mounds on the east bank of the Tigris supposed to be the ruins of ancient Nineveh, which included the now historic mound of Kouyunjik. Two or three years later, being again in those parts, he found that Botta had commenced excavations at Khorsabad and was making great discoveries. He resolved to throw himself into the work of exploration, and he brought to it gifts of no ordinary character—robust health, boundless determination, a rare mastery of the languages of the East, and not a little of the imagination which goes along with a sanguine temperament. It was in the autumn of 1845, as he tells us in 'Nineveh and its Remains,' just when Botta was returning to Europe, that Layard descended the Tigris to Nimroud and set to work on the mounds on the east bank of the Tigris, a little below Mosul. At Nimroud, the site of the ancient Kalah, from 1845 to the middle of 1847, and at Kouyunjik, the very site of Nineveh itself, from 1849 to 1851, the intrepid explorer brought to light no fewer than five great palaces and a multitude of inscriptions and sculptures. The magnificent figures discovered in the course of his excava-

tions, and transported to this country, where they now occupy the Assyrian galleries of the British Museum, at once struck the wonder of Europe, and the excitement and romance of the story as first told in Mr Layard's fascinating volumes, 'Nineveh and its Remains' and 'Discoveries in the Ruins of Nineveh and Babylon,' created a new interest in the history of Assyria in its relation to the Bible. In his later explorations he found an enthusiastic and capable helper in Mr Hormuzd Rassam, an Oriental by race, then British Consul at Mosul, later one of King Theodore's captives in Abyssinia, and now, after a singularly checkered career, the sole survivor, since the death of Sir A. H. Layard and Sir Henry Rawlinson, of the original band of Assyrian pioneers. The labours of Mr W. K. Loftus and Mr J. E. Taylor in succession to Layard have also been fruitful of valuable results. While Loftus was busy on the ruins of Warka (Erech), Taylor with great patience was excavating at Mugayyar (Ur of the Chaldees). To Taylor we owe materials confirming the historical character of Belshazzar mentioned in the Book of Daniel, and other valuable inscriptions. Along with Rassam, Loftus continued the excavations of Mr Layard, and the two explorers were fortunate enough to add largely to the clay tablets belonging to the library discovered in the so-called south-west palace at Kouyunjik. For of all these discoveries none was more fruitful than the discovery of the royal library, founded by Shalmaneser II., enriched by Sargon and his son Sennacherib, and brought to its highest glory by Asshurbanipal, "the great and noble Asnapper" of

Scripture. This famous old-world library contained chronological tables, astronomical calculations, calendars, dictionaries, and even newspapers, all in clay tablets, of which we shall hear more hereafter. Many of those clay tablets were copies obtained in the course of Assyrian conquest from the captured cities of Babylonia; and though Babylon was razed to the ground by the vindictive cruelty of Sennacherib and its literary treasures destroyed, as happened in the overthrow of Constantinople by the Turks nearly two thousand years later, it is some consolation to know that works dating from the far distant times of Sargon of Accad have been found preserved either in the originals or in copies in the library of Asshurbanipal.

For nearly twenty years there was a lull in the work of Assyrian exploration. Before resuming the thread of the history, it will be well here to give some idea of the character of the clay tablets and of the method of their decipherment. It is not on papyrus as in Egypt, nor on parchment as in the Greek and Roman times, but upon clay or alabaster, that the inscriptions of ancient Babylonia and Assyria have come down to us. Not but that the Babylonians made use of the papyrus which grew so plentifully on the margin of their great rivers. But only the tablets of clay and the inscriptions cut in stone have been able to defy the forces of destruction and decay. Clay was the chief material used for writing,—clay in the form of bricks and tablets, cylinders, prisms, and globes.[1] After the soft clay had received from

[1] See Vigouroux, La Bible et les découvertes modernes, vol. i. p. 184 ff.

the stylus employed in writing the impression of the scribe,[1] it was put to the fire or hardened in the sun, and then it was proof against time and fire and water and almost every foe. Even when broken in pieces, unless actually reduced to powder, the tablet could be pieced together again and its text deciphered. If it was a history that was being written, it was inscribed upon tablets all of one size and thickness, the writing being on both sides and continued from the one to the other, the first line of the succeeding tablet being written at the close of the preceding to give the proper clue to the reader. Such books of baked earth were found in numbers in Asshurbanipal's library, where they were classified and catalogued for reference just as in a modern library, the first words of the treatise, whether historical, or astronomical, or generally scientific, forming (as in the case of the books of the Pentateuch) the title of the treatise.

But just as the key to the hieroglyphics of Egypt had become lost, so the key to the wedge-shaped writing of Babylonia and Assyria had perished. To us it seems a singular circumstance that the key to each of these highly developed and copious literatures should have been allowed to perish ; that these parallel streams of ancient culture and civilisation should have disappeared in the Greek and Roman periods, like one of those Australian rivers which lose themselves in the sands. It speaks volumes for the mighty originality of the Greek and Roman literature and civilisation that they not only created that world of thought and culture

[1] Kaulen, Assyrien und Babylonien, p. 112 ff.

and statecraft and art which we associate with the very names of Greece and Rome, but interposed it as a barrier to dam back the flood of Babylonian and Assyrian and Egyptian culture and ideas.[1] It was mainly through Israel that Eastern thought and life entered the Greek and Roman world, just as it was through Phœnicia that it received its notions of commerce and the alphabet, which became the vehicle to express its thought.[2] Who can tell but that it was a most important step in the *Præparatio Evangelica*, or at least in the spread of early Christianity, when the treasure-houses of Babylonian and Egyptian culture were locked and their respective keys thrown away? The decipherment of the cuneiform characters in our day has given us the science of Assyriology, as the decipherment of the hieroglyphics has given us Egyptology.

As far back as the beginning of the seventeenth century travellers had brought to Europe reports and drawings of strange inscriptions which had been found in the ruins of Persepolis. Oriental scholars and travellers, among them the famous Niebuhr,[3]

[1] "Egypt is like her own Sphinx, a broken and decaying riddle, half-buried in a wilderness of sand. The stately pride and power of Assyria lie buried under the mounds that mark where her cities once stood. Greece is living Greece no more, and Rome a strange scene of religious imbecility and confusion, political anarchy and incompleteness. But Israel, transformed indeed and renamed, but in all that constituted its essence and right to existence, Israel still lives in and guides the conscience of Christendom." — Principal Fairbairn, 'Studies in the Philosophy of Religion and History,' p. 309.

[2] Mr Gladstone is of opinion that an important portion of the Olympian scheme of Homer is derived from Hebrew sources.—See 'Contemporary Review,' April 1878, p. 150.

[3] Kaulen, Assyrien und Babylonien, p. 112 ff.

had made some progress in the work of decipherment, when in 1802 the well-known grammarian, Grotefend, by a stroke of genius, struck out the path which led to the interpretation of the Persian cuneiform. It was not for some years that this commencement was followed up. In 1835-37 Colonel Rawlinson discovered and copied the great trilingual inscription cut upon the steep and well-nigh inaccessible rock of Behistun between Ecbatana and Babylon. The three languages of the famous inscription were Persian, Babylonian, and Median or Scythic as it is sometimes called. Rawlinson having these new and fuller materials to work upon, and having a considerable knowledge of Sanscrit, Zend, and Modern Persian, occupied himself first with the Persian cuneiform from 1839 to 1844.[1] The result was given to the world in the years 1844-46 by the publication in the Royal Asiatic Society's Journal of his epoch-making paper, "The Persian Cuneiform Inscription at Behistun, deciphered and translated, with a Memoir on Persian Cuneiform Inscriptions in general and on that of Behistun in particular." Having mastered the Persian cuneiform, he next addressed himself to the Babylonian cuneiform, and in the course of 1847 he copied accurately and at some risk the entire series of Babylonian inscriptions at Behistun. In 1848 he gave himself wholly to the decipherment of the Babylonian, which was all the easier that in the Behistun inscription the second column was a translation, or at any rate an equivalent, of the first. The Babylonian Memoir furnished the basis upon which

[1] Memoir of Sir Henry Rawlinson, pp. 307-333.

Assyrian cuneiform study has rested ever since; and by Rawlinson's labours, with the co-operation of scholars like Edward Hincks, Fox Talbot, George Smith, Professor Sayce, and T. G. Pinches of the British Museum, in Britain, and Jules Oppert, F. Lenormant, J. Halévy, and others on the Continent, the cuneiform inscriptions have been made to yield up their secret. And now Assyrian and Babylonian inscriptions can be read with the same ease as the Egyptian hieroglyphics, and the renderings of their texts by Assyrian scholars may be accepted with a large measure of certainty and without serious misgiving.

To resume the thread of the history, in 1873-74 excavations in Nineveh were resumed by Mr George Smith. Having secured a place as an assistant in the British Museum, he had been engaged in 1867 to assist Sir Henry Rawlinson in preparing a new volume of the Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia. It was when engaged in arranging and reading the tablets of Layard's collection that he alighted upon a fragment of an old Babylonian account of the Flood, remarkably like the account given in the Book of Genesis. His paper on the subject, read before the Society for Biblical Archæology in December 1872, created such an interest that the proprietors of the 'Daily Telegraph' sent him out at their expense to undertake fresh excavations, the results of his labours being the discovery of a number of tablets similar to the Flood tablets in the British Museum. Twice he undertook the journey to the East to search for the remains of the library of Asshurbanipal, but

being seized by the plague at Baghdad on his third journey, he endeavoured to retrace his steps and died in August 1876 at Aleppo, where he now rests by the side of the famous Eastern traveller Burckhardt, his death being an irreparable loss to Assyriology. One of his last services to the cause was the purchase of a remarkable collection of documents for the British Museum, which only reached their destination in the month of November after his death. This collection was discovered in the most accidental way. During the rainy season, early in 1876, one of the great ruin-mounds of Hillah, the site of ancient Babylon, had been cut up by the floods, and this accident had laid bare several large earthen jars which had been previously buried in the *débris*. These jars had the form of the ancient crocks of the country; their mouth was covered with a lid and cemented with bitumen. When opened they were found to be full of Babylonian documents in clay, comprising contracts of every kind, to the number of three or four thousand. They represent private transactions in which figure successively different members of the family of Egibi through a period of about two centuries. The most ancient are of the time of Sennacherib, and the most recent are dated from the reign of Darius Hystaspes. A great number of them are of the period of Ezekiel and Daniel, having been written when the Jews were in captivity in Babylon. Apart from the valuable information they furnish on the social condition and commercial life of the Chaldean empire, they light up wonderfully the chronology of the period. They

are dated by the reigns of the kings; and from the commencement of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar to the end of the reign of Darius Hystaspes there are only four years for which we have not got tablets, and it is a remarkable circumstance that two of these years had been a time of great revolutions. The canon of Ptolemy, a Greek astronomer of the second century of our era, had been for long almost our only means of fixing the chronology of the Chaldean period. These Egibi tablets go to confirm the general accuracy of the Greek canon. They show royal names which do not figure in the canon; princes who reigned less than a year have no place in it; and for some reason or other two kings, Lakkabbasidukur and Marduk-sar-usur, are not mentioned in it. Marduk-sar-usur is no other than the famous Belshazzar of the Book of Daniel, whose name did not appear in the canon of Ptolemy, and whose very existence had up to the discovery of the Egibi tablets been doubted.

After George Smith's lamented death, the British Museum intrusted the continuation of the excavations to Rassam, and between 1877 and 1882 his labours were rewarded with conspicuous success. The temple of Asshurnazirpal in Nimroud in 1878, and the bronze gates of Shalmaneser II. rescued from the rubbish mounds of Balawat, were among his discoveries. Among the tablets discovered by him are two historical texts, which have been of immense service to the historian, known as the Babylonian list of kings and the Babylonian Chronicle. The most important of all his discoveries were, however, the unearthing of Sippar from the ruins of Abu

Habba in 1881, the finding of the renowned temple of the Sun-god, and the discovery of the temple archives, containing a stone tablet of Nabu-bal-iddina, several clay cylinders of Nabonidus, and about 50,000 clay tablets giving exact and detailed information as to gifts and presents offered to the Sun-god and to his priesthood from high and low through a long period of time. The twin mounds of Babylon, Babil and Kasr, as well as Borsippa and Kutha, were also explored by Rassam, and yielded new results of great importance.

The honours of the most recent exploration in ancient Babylonian sites belong mainly to France and America. In the fifties, as we have seen, archæological research was carried on in Babylonia by Loftus, Taylor, and Layard, who discovered the ruined sites of Nippur (Niffer), Erech (Warka), Larsa (Senkereh), Ur (Mugayyar), and Eridu (Abu Shahrein); to which should be added the labours of the Frenchmen, Fresnel and Oppert, who explored Babil and Borsippa at Hillah. But the honour of bringing to light the earliest civilisation of Babylonia fell first of all to Ernst de Sarzec, French vice-consul at Bussorah, on the Persian Gulf. From 1877 onwards he has spent a vast amount of time and strength on the ruins of Telloh, a mound on the canal leading between the Tigris and the Euphrates called Shatt-el-Hai. The excavations of Telloh have been eminently fruitful of results. It is found to be the site of the ancient city of Lagash, and from its ruins have come inscriptions of high antiquity, recording the annals of king Ur-nina and others, and in particular of the priest-

king Gudea, who dates from the middle of the fourth millennium before Christ. In 1894 De Sarzec made one of his richest finds—a collection of records of ancient kings of Lagash, consisting of cuneiform tablets, making known to us an advanced civilisation, with writing and the arts in a flourishing condition, four thousand years before the Christian era.[1]

To America belongs the honour of having reached the Ultima Thule of ancient history. In 1888 the University of Pennsylvania sent forth one of the best organised and most completely equipped expeditions that fall to be recorded in the history of exploration. Nippur—Niffer or Nuffar as it is read—the goal of the expedition, had been examined without result by Layard and also by Loftus, who expressed the hope that excavations might some day be successfully carried out in its extensive ruins. It was to these ruins that the expedition devoted its energies. The hardships and difficulties encountered were many and great—not the least being the malarial fever bred in the Affej swamps, which drove first one and then another member of the expedition from the field, till Mr J. H. Haynes, the business manager, was left alone of the original party to superintend the excavations. The first campaign took place in 1888-89; the second 1889-90; and the third from April 1893, with an interruption of only two months, to February 1896. The expedition has met with a success which has compensated for all hardships. In the

[1] Vigouroux, Découvertes, vol. i. p. 195 ff.; Recent Research in Bible Lands, pp. 63-80; Maspéro, The Dawn of Civilisation, p. 603 ff.

first campaign over two thousand precious cuneiform documents were secured. The second campaign saw still greater success. Hundreds of graves, clay coffins, and urns were opened; and thousands of inscribed bricks and vases and votive tablets were collected. The great temple of Ekur was cleared out, terrace by terrace, from the rubbish millenniums old. The platform of the first king of Ur, who built on the spot 2800 B.C., was reached, and numerous bricks bearing the name of Sargon of Accad, 3800 B.C., and vase inscriptions of Lugal-zaggisi, considerably earlier than 4000 B.C., were discovered. The materials accumulated are simply astonishing in number and antiquity. Over 32,000 cuneiform tablets have been recovered — syllabaries, letters, chronological lists, historical fragments, astronomical and religious texts, inventories, contracts, votive tablets, and even plans of estates. Sargon of Accad and Naram-Sin, whose historical character was until recently quite dubious, now stand out clear in the light of history, and our ideas as to the power and extent of the Semitic race six thousand years ago have to undergo a radical change. Such homely articles as door-sockets, water-cocks, drain-tiles, and domestic utensils in stone and metal, have been found side by side with jewellery in gold, silver, copper, bronze, and various precious stones. Already Professor Peters, who was Director of the expedition in the first two campaigns, has described its operations and chief results in two handsome and interesting volumes.[1] The classification and editing

[1] Nippur: or Explorations and Adventures on the Euphrates. Philadelphia, 1897.

of the numerous and important results have been intrusted to Professor Hilprecht of Philadelphia, the Assyriologist of the expedition. The execution of this part of the enterprise has been delayed to some extent by Professor Hilprecht's breakdown from malarial fever and overwork. Thus far two parts of vol. i., each containing fifty plates, and chronological and archæological essays, have been published.[1] The full account of the results of the expedition is estimated to fill about sixty volumes. Of the bearing of the results so far as published upon the early and patriarchal history in the Book of Genesis, something will be said in another Lecture.

It would not be just to close this rapid sketch without mentioning the interest taken by the Turkish Government in these recent excavations in its own soil. The Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople, which is the destination of all these finds, has now been placed on a scientific basis by its Director-General, Hamdy Bey. By funds granted from his private purse the Sultan has aided in the fresh excavation of the ruins of Sippara (Abu-Habba), and Father Scheil the eminent Assyriologist and Bedry Bey have carried out the work. The excavations have already produced valuable results — bricks of Bur-Sin II., Kurigalzu, and Shamash-Shumakin, and about 500 clay tablets more or less complete. Many of them

[1] In the summer of 1898 vol. ix. has also been published, containing the business documents of Murashû, son of Nippur, dated in the reign of Artaxerxes I. (464-424 B.C.), in which are found a large number of Jewish names known to us from the Old Testament, especially from the books of Ezra and Nehemiah.

contain nothing more than household and other accounts, but among them is what might be called a Babylonian love-letter of the time of Abraham.[1] It is addressed to a lady called Bibeya, and reads as follows: "To Bibeya from Gimil-Marduk. May Shamash and Marduk allow thee, for my sake, to live for ever. I write this in order to inquire after thy health. Let me know how it goes with thee. I am now settled in Babylon, and because I have not seen thee, I am in great anxiety. Send me news when thou wilt come, that I may rejoice at it. At the month of Arakh-Samna (November-December) come. Mayest thou for my sake live for ever!" Among the antiquities which have now found a place in the Imperial Ottoman Museum is a stele of Nabonidus, the antiquarian king of Babylon, who saw the end of the Chaldean *régime*, recently discovered near Hillah. In this stele, which is very incomplete, Nabonidus, contrary to his custom, gives interesting chronological and historical data. Among other things he describes the destruction of Babylon by Sennacherib in 689 B.C., the murder of the king by his own sons (2 Kings xix. 37), and the destructive invasion of the hordes of the Manda under their king whose name is not mentioned.

Of other discoveries notice will be taken as they arise in connection with the Bible history in succeeding Lectures, the recovery of the lost empire of the Hittites, the Sinjirli inscriptions, the inscriptions from Arabia, all of them shedding light on some part of the Scripture narrative.

[1] Recent Research in Bible Lands, p. 81 ff.

From this brief and summarised sketch it will be evident how far back into antiquity goes the art of writing. The inscriptions recently brought to light from the fifth millennium before Christ open up to us possibilities for the transmission of authentic history from the earliest recorded time. To deny the knowledge of the art of writing to Moses or to Abraham, to speak of the patriarchal period as "a time prior to all knowledge of writing, . . . a time when in civilised countries writing was only beginning to be used for the most important matters of State,"[1] is impossible in the face of the Babylonian love-letter, not to speak of thousands of documents from a far earlier antiquity occupied with the commonest topics. We have heard of a version of the Deluge story in poetic form as early as 2140 B.C. There is nothing more surely established by our sketch than the existence of abundant material for accurate history from a period long before the call of Abraham. The antiquity of the great empires in the midst of which the chosen people had their origin and played their part, as now definitely ascertained from the monuments, amply confirms this estimate. The clouds that rested so long upon those great Eastern empires have lifted, and we can see the great movements of commerce and war, conquest and civilisation, in constant progress in the light of these ancient monuments. Light is shed upon the Scripture narrative from all sides. Babylonian and Egyptian annals, statues and seals, winged bulls and household pottery, jewellery and toys,

[1] Schultz, Old Testament Theology, p. 25.

not to speak of temples and priesthoods and the varied ceremonial of religious worship, — in fact, all the tokens of a high civilisation,—are utterly inconsistent with the mythical and legendary character attributed to the early history of Israel. The monuments have arisen from the dust of millenniums to confirm the truth of Scripture at a time when it is being seriously questioned, and they have been recovered just when, in the providence of God, scholarship and science are sufficiently advanced to enable us to read their testimony. And we cannot traverse, however cursorily, the ground which has occupied our thoughts in this Lecture without realising more forcibly than ever the truth of the divine word: "All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away: but the word of the Lord endureth for ever" (1 Peter i. 24, 25).

LECTURE II.

BABYLONIAN LITERATURE AND THE EARLY NARRATIVES OF GENESIS.

THE magnificent figures discovered in the ruins of Nineveh by Layard, and now adorning the Assyrian Galleries of the British Museum, at once excited the admiration of Europe. Though less striking to the popular imagination, far more precious to the philologist and the historian were the clay tablets recovered by Layard and George Smith and other explorers from the mounds of Nineveh, and especially from the ruins of the library of Asshurbanipal. Asshurbanipal, the son of Esarhaddon and grandson of Sennacherib, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks, and "the great and noble Asnapper" of the Bible (Ezra iv. 10), was not only a successful warrior and a powerful monarch, but an eminent patron of letters, whose age is a kind of Augustan age in Assyrian literature. He had been educated from early youth in the arts and sciences of Babylonia, and it is to his strong literary tastes that we owe so many remains of old Babylonian literature. He devoted himself to the enrichment of the Royal Library, which had been founded by Shalmaneser

II. in 860 B.C., which had benefited greatly by the patronage of Sargon, and to which Sennacherib —as some compensation for a deed of ruthless barbarity—had contributed from the literary treasures of captured Babylon. For this purpose he had numerous scribes constantly engaged in copying for its shelves in the Assyrian character famous works of old Babylonian authors. "When rebellion had been quelled in Babylonia and the Babylonian cities had been taken by storm," says Professor Sayce,[1] "the spoils that were most acceptable to the Assyrian king were the written volumes that their libraries contained. No present could be sent to him which would be valued more than some old text from Erech, or Ur, or Babylon." With the exception, in fact, of the Assyrian historical inscriptions, contracts, letters, and reports of only inferior importance, all, or nearly all, the texts found in Asshurbanipal's library are of Babylonian origin, having been composed and produced in Babylonia. We need to keep this distinction between what is Assyrian and what is Babylonian clearly before our minds. "Babylonia," as Professor Hommel points out,[2] "is the cradle of the earliest civilisation, and could look back to a history covering several thousands of years at a time (about 1900 B.C.) when the history of Assyria was in its infancy: it is for this reason that the Assyrian civilisation (its language, script, and religion) is, in the main, merely an offshoot of the Babylonian. It is absurd, therefore, to speak of an independent Assyrian literature, unless

[1] Hibbert Lectures, p. 10 ff.
[2] Ancient Hebrew Tradition, p. 31.

of course we are prepared to regard the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings as a separate school of literature by itself." The material which Asshurbanipal placed in his library consisted, however, with unimportant exceptions which we have just named, of mere copies of earlier Babylonian texts.

Under the description of Babylonian literature we include the texts that have been transmitted to us in the old Accadian language, because they also arose on Babylonian soil, and are memorials of the intellectual life of the earliest Babylonians. The older Turanian or Accadian population of Shinar, the people now rather called by the name of Sumerians, Sumer being the old name for Shinar, had offered their native speech to the later immigrant Semitic people who adopted their written characters; and since then the written language has remained the same on Assyrian and Babylonian soil. One of the immediate results of the recent discoveries at Telloh and Nippur, as Friedrich Delitzsch admits in his essay on 'The Origin of the Earliest System of Writing,'[1] is to confirm the view that there was a Sumerian race, and a Sumerian civilisation, and a Sumerian language, as against the view maintained with great ability by Halévy, Professor M'Curdy, and even for a time by Delitzsch himself, that there had never been a Sumerian language, that what was so represented was only a sort of cipher writing or secret script—an artificial language, in fact, of a priestly or esoteric character—which got the name of Acca-

[1] Entstehung des Aeltesten Schriftsystems. Leipzig, 1897.

dian or Sumerian. The oldest written documents known have come down to us in this Babylonian cuneiform, which for three thousand years—we cannot well tell how much longer — was the dominant system of writing within Babylonia proper. Whether the earliest works in this literature, like the Law among the Hebrews, or the Koran among the Arabs, stereotyped the written representation, while the oral speech changed, we cannot say. But true it is, the Semitic people on the banks of the Euphrates and the Tigris all along composed the monuments of their intellectual activity in the speech of their remote ancestors; and as most of the productions of Babylonian literature have come to us from the great libraries of Assyria, we are wont to speak of the language as Assyrian. This literature, if literature we may call it, is exceedingly varied.[1] It comprises legends like those of the Creation and the Flood; hymns and penitential psalms; incantations and proverbs; phrase tablets in Accadian and Assyrian; syllabaries in three and even four columns; grammatical books and glossaries explaining words of foreign origin; omen tablets, astrological reports, and astronomical observations of no mean order; contracts, lawsuits, and documents connected with business and trade; and, specially valuable for the chronology and the history, lists of kings, with their annals and the length of their reigns. If these are not what we would call literature, they are the raw materials of literature, materials out of which a Herodotus, or a Livy, or a Gibbon could have given the world

[1] See Kaulen, Assyrien und Babylonien, pp. 140, 141.

an entrancing history. It has, indeed, been objected that history cannot be written from inscriptions and epigraphic sources alone, and this, as a rule, is true. But, as Professor Tiele has well pointed out in his Babylonian-Assyrian History,[1] the epigraphic or inscriptional character of these old Babylonian texts is more apparent than real. There is much that is purely epigraphic; but the historical inscriptions of great cylinders and prisms, the annals and state-records which the Assyrian kings had engraven on the walls of their palaces, are in fact so many pieces of history, multiplied by the chisel. That Babylonian literature was rich in legendary lore and in imaginative works is shown by the list which Hommel gives of such works.[2] Besides the Creation Epos, and the Nimrod Epos containing the Deluge story, he enumerates the legend of Istar's descent into Hades, the legend of Namtar, a sort of Babylonian Persephone story, the Adapa legend, the Etana legend, the legends of the god Zû, and the legend of the god Girra, or Nergal in his martial capacity. He mentions, besides, historical narratives supposed to be thrown into romance forms, like the stories of Sargon of Accad and Kudur-Dugmal, the king of Elam. When Nineveh was overthrown in 606 B.C., all these productions, with the other contents of Asshurbanipal's library, were buried in the ruins of the city, and the clay tablets, not being destructible like the papyrus rolls, which have all

[1] Babylonisch-Assyrische Geschichte, p. 18.

[2] See article "Babylonia" in 'Dictionary of the Bible.' Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark.

perished, were stored up in the soil of Assyria till Layard and his coadjutors brought them to the light of day.

Among the clay tablets thus recovered from oblivion and deciphered with such patience and skill, the most interesting to us are those epic poems which, as we have indicated, afford parallels to the Bible record of the Creation and the Flood, and others which seem to present parallels to the Sabbath, to Paradise, to the Fall, and to the beginnings of civilisation as recorded in Scripture. Of these several whole series have been recovered. The task of decipherment has not been easy. As an illustration of the labour and ingenuity required, Professor Hilprecht[1] says of the decipherment of one of the Nippur inscriptions: "Certain cuneiform characters could not be recognised distinctly on the original except in the light immediately preceding sunrise, the best time for copying difficult cuneiform inscriptions." Even the task of collecting and piecing together the tablets and fragments of tablets into a connected series must obviously have required enormous patience and toil. We know how difficult it is to piece together the fragments of a letter we have inadvertently torn up and thrown into the wastepaper-basket. If the contents of the wastepaper-basket have been thrown into the dust-heap, the labour is greater still. But patiently to gather out of broken heaps of thousands of clay tablets the fragments belonging to one tablet or to a series of tablets, not only to make search for them in the Assyrian Chambers

[1] Babylonian Expedition, vol. i. part i. p. 35.

of the British Museum, but even to make journeys to the ruined site of Nineveh in quest of missing links,—this was the herculean task demanded of the Assyrian scholars engaged in these researches. It was only a few days after he had begun his search in the mound of Kouyunjik in 1873 that Mr George Smith, commissioned, as we have seen, by the 'Daily Telegraph' for the purpose, found the fragment which enabled him to fill up the only serious blank there was in the Babylonian account of the Deluge. By means of a tablet brought from Babylonia in 1887 by Mr Hormuzd Rassam, one of the largest gaps in the Creation epic was supplied, and a new impetus given to its study. And it has not been left to Nineveh alone to furnish materials for this series of texts. Tel el-Amarna has given us two legends which fit into the series, one of them of special interest, inasmuch as it supplies the nearest Chaldean parallel which we possess to the Scripture narrative of the Fall, both of them showing how documents from the temples of Babylonia were being studied and copied in Egypt before the days of Moses. Nor are we confined to one edition of these texts. "We have now," says Mr W. S. Boscawen,[1] "both duplicates and additional fragments from the libraries of both Borsippa and Sippara (Sepharvaim), as well as portions of a still older legend from the ancient priest-city of Cutha. These Babylonian copies are of great importance, as they cannot have been taken from the Assyrian tablets, which were probably buried at the time of the fall of Nineveh, but are from older copies in

[1] The Bible and the Monuments, p. 38.

their own libraries. They are most valuable also because of certain variants they afford, which explain obscure passages."

Let us direct our attention first *to the Chaldean account of the Creation.* Before proceeding to Mesopotamia in the endeavour to obtain more fragments of the Babylonian narrative on the journey from which he never returned, Mr George Smith prepared this text, so far as recovered, for publication in a popular form, and gave copies to the leading Assyrian scholars of the day, that it might be studied in the meantime. In a note accompanying the publication he says: "The present copies of the Chaldæan account of the Creation were written during the reign of Asshurbanipal, B.C. 673-626, but they appear to be copies of a much older Chaldæan work, the date of the composition of which was probably near B.C. 2000. The legends existed, however, earlier than this, and were in the form of oral traditions, handed down from time to time, until during the great literary age in Babylonia they were committed to writing." Of this "great literary age in Babylonia," embracing, as we shall see, the times of Abraham, we shall hear more as we proceed. The Babylonian Creation Epos thus introduced to the modern world is a work manifestly of the greatest interest. It is contained in a series of tablets or books, apparently seven in number, and since the creation is described as consisting of a similar series of successive acts, it presents a marked similarity to the Biblical narrative in the first and second chapters of Genesis. According to

the most recent research,[1] it is an epic poem in seven books. That it is a poem has now been placed beyond doubt, and the laws regulating the metre have been worked out and definitely laid down. There is some doubt as to the second book, portions assigned to it being by some authorities attached rather to the first and the third. The sixth book is still almost wholly wanting, and the seventh exists only in fragments which barely suffice to yield a connected meaning.

The opening words of the first tablet are in striking accord with the first verses of Genesis, and after their own fashion tell of "the beginning" in which God created the heavens and the earth. They run as follows:—

"When on high the heavens were named not
And earth beneath had received no name,
Then the abyss of waters was in the beginning their generator,
The chaos of the deep was one who bore them all.
Their waters were embosomed together, and
The field was uncultivated, the marsh [-plant] ungrown.
When the gods had not appeared, any one of them,
No name had they received, no destiny [had they fixed],
Then were the [great] gods created,
Lakhmu and Lakhamu issued forth [the first];
Until they grew up [and waxed old],
When Ansar and Kisar (the upper and the lower firmament) were created.
Long were the days [until]
Anu [Bel] and Ea were created:
Ansar [and Kisar created them]."

The poem proceeds to tell, almost in the style of Milton, of a struggle between Tiamat, the female personification of the primeval waters, and the rest

[1] Das Babylonische Welt-Schöpfungs-Epos. Von Friedrich Delitzsch, Leipzig, 1896.

of the gods; Tiamat being the feminine form of a word almost identical with the Hebrew *tehôm*, the deep—"darkness was upon the face of the deep" (Gen. i. 2). Anu claims the right to decide between them, but Tiamat declares war, having with her the eleven monsters she has brought into being, and binding the tablets of destiny to the breast of her consort Kingu in token of his exaltation to universal supremacy. Ansar, after fruitless attempts through the medium of Anu, Ea, and Marduk to conciliate Tiamat, sends to inform Lakhmu and Lakhamu that Marduk is prepared to undertake the conflict with Tiamat. The fourth tablet, which we possess complete, describes in powerful imagery the final struggle between Marduk, the god of light, and Tiamat, the dragon of the dark primeval waters. Marduk is victorious, taking captive the gods who are Tiamat's allies, cleaving Tiamat herself in twain, and out of the one-half of her skin fashioning the firmament of heaven, and out of the other forming the earth. The eleven monsters allied with the dragon he places in the sky to be the signs of the zodiac, himself being the twelfth. Whatever significance one may attach to its details, one cannot read the story of this legendary conflict without thinking of the age-long conflict shadowed forth in the primeval Gospel (Gen. iii. 15) between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent; and who can tell but that it is a distant echo of that primeval strife which is heard in the Book of the Revelation (Rev. xii. 7, 8): "There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed

not; neither was their place found any more in heaven"?

As has been already indicated, other versions of the Babylonian Creation story have been found. The legend of Eridu contained in a small tablet in the British Museum, written in Accadian and Semitic Babylonian, and believed to have come from the temple of Nebo at Borsippa, runs as follows:—

"The holy house, the house of the gods, in a holy site had not been made.
A reed had not sprung up, a tree was not made.
A brick was not laid, a beam was not made.
A house was not constructed, a city was not built.
A city was not made, an abode was not made strong.
Nippur had not been built, Ekurra was not constructed,
Erech had not been built, Eanna was not constructed,
The Absu was not made. Eridu was not built.
The holy house, the house of the gods, its site was not made.
The whole world, the sea also. . . .
In the midst of the sea was a flowing tide.
At that time Eridu was built, Esagila was constructed.
. . . . . .
Merodach a wide space on the face of the deep bound round.
He made dust and poured it on the space.
The gods in the abode of joy of heart he seated.
He made mankind."

It is noticeable here that only Babylonian cities and none of Assyria are named, the circumstance being a testimony to the great antiquity of the legend. It seems from fragments supposed to belong to the sixth tablet of the Babylonian Creation Epos that this tablet dealt with the same subject, but it makes mention of Assur as well as of Nippur. If the Babylonian Creation Epos is more in accord with the first chapter of

Genesis, this Eridu legend is more in accord with the second chapter. "The antiquity of the Sumerian legend," says Professor Sayce,[1] "and its close dependence upon the foundation of the great temple of Eridu, show that it must be the older; and we must therefore see in it the earliest starting-point yet known to us of that form of the story of Creation which we find in the second chapter of Genesis."

Incomplete as these old Creation records are, there are some points that stand out clear enough from them. For one thing, we notice that the gods are themselves created beings, or of secondary origin. Then, again, we are struck by this Babylonian Trinity, Anu, Bel, and Ea, and also by Marduk, who fulfils the part of demiurge or mediator, who makes the worlds, who ministers to the need of men, who does battle victoriously against the powers of evil. Thirdly, as Professor M'Curdy has pointed out,[2] there is no indication of the independent existence of a pre-mundane deity, standing apart from the material of the world and acting upon it either creatively or formatively: the creative deities are themselves developed out of already existing material, ultimately from the chaos of waters itself. Finally, when we set the Babylonian records of creation over against the Biblical we observe amid natural resemblances a tremendous contrast. We turn again from those Babylonian traditions, so picturesque and so interesting for their very antiquity,

[1] Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 93.
[2] Homiletic Review, July 1897.

to the story of Genesis, and we are struck as never before by the beauty, simplicity, and purity, by the high moral and spiritual purpose, and by the lofty conception of God as the living and true God running through the Biblical account, in direct contrast to the gross polytheism disfiguring even the loftiest of those Chaldean traditions. In the Babylonian cosmogony we find a materialistic philosophy at work in combination with an extremely free poetical imagination throwing off mythological elements without restraint. That some of the cosmological fancies of the early Babylonians, sifted and purified as we have described, entered into the Scripture record is very likely from allusions in the prophets, and especially in the Book of Job. The Hebrew mind, whether receiving its conception of creation as part of what Keble has called so beautifully "the wreck of Paradise," or working upon those early Babylonian traditions, and purifying and recasting them under the influence of the Spirit of Revelation, exhibits the one living and true God as the Creator of all, fashioning the whole and giving to every part its function according to His sovereign will; and exhibits man as the goal of creation, for whose well-being and destiny all things have been prepared. But between the polytheism of the Babylonian Creation record and the monotheism of the Biblical narrative, between the motives ascribed to the gods of the Chaldean pantheon and the purpose of God in creating man in His own image, there is an impassable gulf. We see, as it appears to me, in the purifying and sifting of those early and legendary narratives by the Spirit of Revelation in the

Scripture writers, the working of that Spirit who dwelt and wrought in the whole marvellous and providential history of the chosen people, whose potency was felt in the national and typical institutions of Israel, and who, when the fulness of the time had come, dwelt without measure in Him who is the Word Incarnate, and who brought the revelation of the Father to its glorious perfection.

We pass on to those other subjects which are so closely related to the Creation in the Book of Genesis. The first of these is the *Sabbath*, which is shown to be not a comparatively late and restricted Jewish institution, but as old as creation itself. It was known and observed among the ancient Babylonians. It is presented, in fact, in connection with a very rigid Sabbatarianism. The seventh, fourteenth, twenty-first, twenty-eighth, and also, curiously enough, the nineteenth days of the month are called unlawful days—*dies nefasti*, or, as we should call them, *dies non*—when business was not to be transacted. But in a lexicographical tablet in the British Museum the word *Sabattu*, the Sabbath, is found, and is explained by words which mean "a day of rest for the heart." In another list it is rendered by *Salum*, which means "rest or completion," and surely recalls how "on the seventh day God finished His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it" (Gen. ii. 2, 3, R.V.) In these old Babylonian calendars we have the Sabbath rest and abstinence from work expressly prescribed: "The seventh day is a resting day to

Merodach and Zarpanit, a holy day, a Sabbath. The Shepherd of mighty nations must not eat flesh cooked at the fire or in the smoke. His clothes he changes not. A washing he must not make. He must not offer sacrifice. The king must not drive in his chariot. He must not issue royal decrees. In a secret place the augur a muttering makes not. Medicine for the sickness of his body one must not apply. For making a curse it is not fit." [1] Were it not for indubitable evidence of the high antiquity of the texts containing these calendars, this uncompromising Sabbatarianism, admitting no works of necessity or mercy, might have pointed to a late origin, under the *régime* of the narrowest Judaism. That the seventh day should have this sacred character is in accord with the sacredness attributed to the number seven in the Babylonian economy. Among the Accadians seven was the number of completeness. In the syllabaries the names of the seven planetary deities are found. There are seven evil spirits having their origin in the depths; the serpent of the Hymns has seven heads; and the sacred tree has seven branches.

It has been doubted whether any direct reference to *Paradise* is to be found in the ancient Babylonian legends. The tree of life, identified with the palm, figures largely in Babylonian art, and there are traces too of a tree of knowledge. The Eden of the Biblical narrative is supposed to be found in the Assyrian word *idinu*, a field or plain, which was used also with a restricted application to the great alluvial

[1] See Sayce, Hibbert Lectures, pp. 73, 74; Boscawen, The Bible and the Monuments, p. 67.

plain or field of Chaldea. The attempt of Friedrich Delitzsch, in his singularly interesting and exhaustive essay on the 'Site of Paradise,'[1] to locate Eden among the canals between the Euphrates and the Tigris, in a region of rare fertility and beauty, has a value quite independent of any opinion we may hold as to the success of his main contention. The antiquity of some of those canals is demonstrated by the mighty cities like Nippur and Lagash and Larsa which have grown up upon their banks. "We may at least," says Professor M'Curdy, "say with confidence that in this portion of the river country where the streams lie nearest together, it was most easy and natural to utilise the conditions that were so favourable for the successive development of agriculture, inland navigation, trade, and manufactures; and may also point to the fact that the earliest recorded civilisation had its home in that very region, where it comes to view as in many respects a finished product, with a past behind it of indefinite duration and an unknown number of stages of development."[2] An old Sumerian hymn does connect the garden with "the good city" of Eridu, the city of the god Ea, the Neptune of the Babylonian Pantheon, itself a seaport of renown in the ancient world, the original seaport of Chaldea:—

"At Eridu a palmstalk grew overshadowing; in a holy place did it become green;
Its root was of bright lapis which stretched towards the deep,
Before the god Ea was its growth at Eridu, teeming with fertility;

[1] Wo lag das Paradies?

[2] History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 125.

Its seat was the central place of the earth;
Its foliage was the couch of Bau, the primeval mother.
Into the heart of its holy house which spread its shade like a forest hath no man entered."

The connection of the *Serpent* with Paradise is quite a Babylonian conception. In a picture on an old cylinder seal, which has been often reproduced, a serpent is seen twining itself behind a seated female figure. In front of the figure stands a palm, and on the other side of the palm sits a personage whose ox-horns mark him out as a divinity. Both figures, however, are represented as stretching out their hands to the fruit of the tree which stands between them. The Babylonian dragon of the primeval world is a monster with the head of a lion and the feet of an eagle; but after his defeat by Marduk he is transported to heaven in the form of a serpent. In the third Creation tablet, describing how Ansar secured from "the great gods" the right to represent them in the struggle against Tiamat, a reference to the Fall has been found by some scholars. The passage reads as follows:—

"The great gods, all of them determiners of fate,
They entered, and, death-like, the god Sar filled.
In sin one with the other in compact joins.
The command was established in the garden of God.
The Asnan (fruit) they ate, they broke in two,
Its stalk they destroyed;
The sweet juice which injures the body.
Great is their sin. Themselves they exalted.
To Merodach, their Redeemer, he appointed their fate."

The legend of Adapa may also contain a parallel to *the Fall*. This legend has a romantic literary

history. The beginning of it was brought to the British Museum from the ruins of Nineveh, part of the spoils of the library of Asshurbanipal, and the middle portion was found at Tel el-Amarna, where it had been read and studied 800 years before the Assyrian copy had been made for that royal patron of letters. Adapa, who is called the Seed of Mankind, and who, having accidentally broken the wings of the South Wind, is accused before Anu, forfeits for ever the immortality offered him by Anu by his refusal to take from the god, now reconciled, the bread and the water of life. "If in addition to this," says Professor Hommel,[1] "we note the prominent place occupied by the knowledge of sin and the yearning after forgiveness amongst the Babylonian Semites, the existence of a narrative of the Fall standing in intimate relation to Paradise can scarcely any longer be doubted." Quite a number of penitential psalms have come down to us addressed to the Accadian and Sumerian divinities, revealing a sense of sin and a sorrow for it wonderfully deep and sincere. The following lines of a Sumerian psalm from Eridu give an illustration of this penitence :—

"The transgression that I committed I knew not,
The sin that I sinned I knew not,
The forbidden thing did I eat,
The forbidden thing did I trample upon.
My lord in the anger of his heart has punished me;
God in the violence of his heart has revealed himself to me."

More remarkable than any that we have yet mentioned is the parallelism between the Biblical and

[1] Dictionary of the Bible, art. "Babylonia."

the Babylonian *narratives of the Flood.* Of the Babylonian account of the Flood we have now two versions,—one that has come down to us through Berosus, an old Chaldean priest, who translated the records of Babylonia into Greek, and flourished in the third century before Christ; and another in the cuneiform writing of Babylonia, the discovery of which, among the literary treasures of ancient Nineveh, we owe again to the genius of Mr George Smith.

The account given by Berosus is now seen to be independent of the Biblical account, and is closely related to the Babylonian. He tells us that it was in the reign of Xisuthrus, the tenth of the kings of Babylon who ruled before the Flood, that the Deluge took place. Oannes appeared to him in a dream and warned him of the approaching destruction of the human race. The god further commanded him to commit to writing the history of everything connected with the catastrophe, and to bury it in the city of the Sun at Sippara; to build a vessel for the safety of himself, his family, and his nearest friends, to store it with sufficient provision of food and drink, and to bring into it winged and four-footed creatures. Xisuthrus obeyed, and built a vessel, five stadia in length and two in breadth, and having gathered all together, entered with his wife and children and nearest friends. When the flood had come and had begun to subside, Xisuthrus let birds fly forth from the vessel, but they found neither food nor resting-place, and returned. After a few days he let them go again, and they came back with mud

on their feet. A third time he let them go, and they returned no more. From which Xisuthrus perceived that the dry land again appeared. He made an opening accordingly in the roof of the ship, and saw that it had now settled on a mountain. He then disembarked with his wife, his daughter, and the steersman of the vessel; he worshipped the earth, reared an altar, and offered sacrifices to the gods; and having done this he vanished, along with those who accompanied him. Those who had been left behind now came out of the ship and sought for him, calling him by name. To them he appeared no more; but a voice sounded forth, bidding them fear the gods, with whom he was going to dwell along with his wife and daughter and the steersman. He reminded them of the buried books which they were to dig up on their return to Babylon, telling them they were now in the land of Armenia. A part of the vessel, Berosus concludes, remains to this day on the Gordian Mountains in Armenia, and pilgrims bring back pieces of the wreck to use as amulets. Such is the Deluge story which has come down to us from the old Chaldean priest, and which has acquired greatly increased significance by Mr George Smith's discovery of an original Babylonian record of the same catastrophe.

To that remarkable record let us now turn for a little. The Babylonian Flood-story is not, be it observed, an independent epic like the Creation epic. It has really been found to occupy a canto of the greatest of all the ancient Babylonian poems, the so-called Nimrod Epos. This epic poem, con-

sisting of three thousand lines, is in twelve cantos, named by the twelve signs of the zodiac; and it is fitting that the eleventh canto, named from Aquarius the Water-carrier, should describe the flood sent by Ramman, the storm-god of the Babylonian Pantheon, to destroy the family of man. The old Accadian name of the eleventh month signifies "month of the curse of rain" — that is, says Schrader,[1] "month of the judgment of the flood." The poem, of which there were three copies in Asshurbanipal's library, made from a very ancient specimen in the sacerdotal library of Erech, is virtually complete. The hero of the epic, the Hercules of Babylonian literature, variously named Izdhubar and Gišdubar, is now provisionally called Gilgames. As the Semitic reading of the Sumerian Gilgames was Namrasit, the nearest prototype to the Hebrew Nimrod, and as his story presents analogies to the story of Nimrod, the whole poem is known as the Nimrod Epos.[2] If it be the case that every epic has a thread of history on which it is strung, we may look in the old history of Babylonia for such a thread. But whatever the immediate occasion of this epic, one thing is clear, that it incorporates legends of a still older and even prehistoric time. Just as Tennyson has taken up the old Arthurian

[1] Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament, vol. i. p. 47.

[2] We have said the hero is "provisionally named Gilgames." One of the chief difficulties in the old Babylonian writing lies in the uncertain readings of proper names. Native place and personal names are for the most part written wholly or partly in ideograms, and written with such whimsical variations that many a time in one name the same ideogram appears with quite a different meaning. And so, when the right pronunciation is not known from parallel passages in classical or Hebrew sources, there is more or less uncertainty.

legend and fitted it into the "Morte d'Arthur" breathing the spirit of our modern life, so that old Babylonian poet worked into his epic this Flood legend of earlier times.

The motive of the epic is drawn, we are told, from the Elamite occupation of Erech, where the tyrant Khumbaba, a successor of Kudur-Nankhundi, is described as a ruthless oppressor, who has brought desolation and distress upon the people as well as disgrace upon the exiled goddess Ishtar, the original of the Canaanite Ashteroth. In the poem the deliverance effected by the hero has as its basis the historical fact of the gradual overthrow and expulsion of the hated foreigners. Gilgames, the hero, belonged to the city of Surippak on the Euphrates, a city of which no trace has yet been found. He became king of Erech, where he reigned as tyrant till the gods created Ea-bani to destroy him. The two, however, struck up a friendship after Gilgames had overcome a mighty lion, and together they deliver the city of Erech from the oppressor Khumbaba. Ishtar now offers herself in marriage to the hero but is refused, and in revenge the goddess compasses the death of Ea-bani, and smites Gilgames with an incurable disease. In quest of relief he sets out for the dwelling-place of his great-grandfather, Sit-napisti (rescue of life), the Babylonian Noah, also called Khasis-adra, far away on the ocean in the Isles of the Blessed. To reach this happy abode he first traverses the land of Mâshu (in Central Arabia, according to Hommel), and then crosses the waters of death to Sit-napisti, who tells him that his

translation without dying was due to his piety, and then, having given him a full account of his own deliverance from the flood, heals him of his disease, and bestows upon him the plant of life. The plant of life is snatched from him on his way home by an earth lion—that is, a serpent. On his arrival at Erech he bewails, in the temple of the goddess Ninsunna, the death of his friend Ea-bani, and prays the god Nergal to restore Ea-bani to him. With the granting of this request, and a graphic description of the under-world by Ea-bani, the epic comes to a close. That description of the under-world is interesting, as showing the belief of the Babylonians in an after-life and two separate states, one of sorrow and wretchedness, the other of happiness and bliss. They are powerfully delineated in the poem. "Return me," says the ghost of Ea-bani,

"From Hades, the land of my knowledge;
From the house of the departed, the seat of the god Irkalla;
From the house within which is no exit;
From the road the course of which never returns;
From the place within which they long for light;
The place where dust is their nourishment and their food mud.
Its chiefs are like birds clothed with wings;
Light is never seen, in darkness they dwell.
To the place of seers which I will enter
. . . . . .
To whom the gods, Anu and Bel, have given renowned names.
A place where water is abundant, drawn from perennial springs.
To the place of seers which I will enter,
The place of chiefs and unconquered ones,
The place of bards and great men,
The place of interpreters of the wisdom of the great gods,
The place of the mighty, the dwelling of the god Ner."[1]

[1] George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries, pp. 202, 203.

The Flood story itself, as told by Sit-napisti to the hero of the poem, commences with the decision of the gods Anu, Bel, Adar, and Ea to send a flood as a judgment on the sins of the men of Surippak. The decision is announced to Sit-napisti—or Pir-napisti, as he is now more commonly called—by Ea, the lord of the under-world, who says to him :—

"Resign thy goods and cause thy soul to live,
And bring all the seed of life into the midst of the ship."

Sit-napisti built the ship of prescribed dimensions, pouring "pitch over the outside" and "bitumen over the inside," bringing into it when completed and provisioned, and after due warning had been given to all concerned, all his family, his servants, and his goods, and finally himself entering within the ship and closing the door. Then "arose from the horizon of heaven a black cloud, the storm-god Ramman thundered in its midst;" "over the face of the mountains the waters rose;" "six days and six nights rages the wind; the flood and the storm devastate." When "the tempest of the Deluge was ended," Sit-napisti looked upon its deadly work :—

"I beheld the deep and uttered a cry,
For the whole of mankind was turned to clay;
Like trunks of trees did the bodies float.
I opened the window and the light fell upon my face;
I stooped and sat down weeping,
Over my face ran my tears.
I beheld a shore beyond the sea;
Toward the twelfth degree rose a land.
On the mountain of Nizir the ship grounded."

Then come incidents which are at once recognised

as closely parallel to the Scripture narrative of the Flood :—

"On the mountain of Nizir the ship grounded.
One day and a second day did the mountain of Nizir hold it.
When the seventh day came I sent forth a dove and let it go.
The dove went and returned; a resting-place it found not and it turned back.
I sent forth a swallow and let it go; the swallow went and returned;
A resting-place it found not and it turned back.
I sent forth a raven and let it go:
The raven went and saw the going down of the waters, and
It approached, it waded, it croaked, and did not turn back."

Then follow the coming forth from the ark, the sacrifice, and even the rainbow :—

"Already at the moment of her coming the great goddess
Lifted up the mighty bow which Anu had made according to his wish."

As explaining the motives of the gods in sending the flood upon men, we have the remonstrance of Ea, the god of wisdom, addressed to the warrior Bel, who in his quality of storm-god had presided over it :—

"Why, O why, didst thou not take counsel, but didst cause a deluge?
Let the sinner bear his own sin, let the evil-doer bear his own evil-doing."

Ea goes on to plead that there should be no more deluge,—rather let lions devour, and jackals make havoc, and famine waste, and pestilence devastate, reminding us of the words of the Scripture story: "Neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth" (Gen. ix. 11).

And as God said unto Noah and to his sons with him, "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and with your seed after you," so Sit-napisti closes his narrative with the announcement of a similar engagement on the part of Bel, "He turned himself to us and established himself to us in a covenant." In the end Sit-napisti and his wife were "made like unto gods," and borne away to dwell in a remote place at the mouth of the rivers.[1]

No one can study the Babylonian and the Biblical narratives of the Flood without being struck with the points of resemblance, and, in the midst of prevailing resemblance, with points of difference. The resemblance is sufficient to connect the Biblical narrative organically with the Babylonian tradition, and to prove community of origin between them, such as does not appear to obtain between them and the Greek or Indian or any other tradition of the Flood. Whilst the resemblances thus prove community of origin and intimate relationship, the differences disprove direct dependence. For one thing, the Babylonian tradition implies a people largely maritime; the Biblical an inland people. Again, the Babylonian narrative represents Sit-napisti as surrounded by a whole company of servants and companions; in the Bible, Noah and his family alone are saved, and from them the devastated world is repeopled. As in the case of the Creation narratives, the decisive difference is the moral and spiritual. The Babylonian account is disfigured by elements of gross polytheism; the Biblical account exhibits the same

[1] See Appendix, Note III., p. 321.

pure monotheism and the same lofty spiritual purpose which we remarked in the story of the Creation. When we study the Babylonian legend we find a multitude of gods in the likeness of men, subject to human passions, liable to human frailties, even quarrelling among themselves, terrified by a storm, skulking before the tempest—it is the very image of the poem — like dogs to their kennel. When we study the Biblical narrative we see the mercy of Jehovah manifesting itself even amid the rigours of vengeance, His tenderness encircling the faithful remnant, His preserving care for the creatures He has made, His kindness in remembering Noah and every living thing in the ark, His undivided and inapproachable sovereignty over all nature,—all these features, so touching and so truly divine, yet so pronounced and so natural in the Bible story of the Flood, separate it as light is separated from darkness from the Babylonian record. "Whoever will study," says the Abbé Vigouroux, "the two narratives of the Flood, so similar on what we may call the material side, as remote from one another as heaven from earth on the spiritual and theological side, will not be able to refrain from crying out in admiration before the pages of Holy Scripture, 'The finger of God is here.'"[1]

Whilst we are prepared to stake the character of these early narratives in Genesis as revelation upon the high spiritual purpose and the majestic simplicity born of belief in the one living and true God, which differentiate them so markedly from

[1] La Bible et les découvertes modernes, vol. i. p. 333.

the Babylonian legends with which they have so much in common, there are still one or two questions which demand discussion.

1. How far, for example, are we to regard these early Genesis narratives as absolutely historical? Here they are intertwined with these relics of early human tradition; in what character are we to regard them? Undoubtedly their kinship with these old Babylonian traditions does suggest that the early Genesis narratives partake of the same external literary character. No doubt the tradition of the Flood is so widespread as evidently to rest upon an actual historical event,[1] and the order of the Creation in the first chapter of Genesis is wonderfully in accord with the findings of modern science.[2] We cannot treat the Biblical record now in isolation. We must take into account, in any estimate of the Scripture record, those old traditions with which, in external and literary form at all events, the Bible narrative has such close affinity. It seems quite a correct inference, from a comparison of these ancient Babylonian legends with the Bible

[1] Bartlett, The Veracity of the Hexateuch, p. 151 ff.

[2] In 'The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture,' Mr Gladstone says: "The question finally to be decided is not whether according to the present state of knowledge the recital in the Book of Genesis is at each several point either precise or complete. It may here be general, there particular; it may here describe a continuous process, and it may there make large omissions, if the things omitted are either absolutely or comparatively immaterial to its progress; it may be careful of the actual succession of time, or may deviate from it according as the one or the other best subserved the general and principal aim; so that the true question is this, Do the doctrines of the Creation story in Genesis appear to stand in such a relation to the facts of natural science, so far as they are ascertained, as to warrant or require our concluding that the first proceeded, in a manner above the ordinary manner, from the Author of the visible Creation?"

narrative, to hold that the Spirit of Revelation has taken those old and far-descended traditions of the human family and remoulded them and purified them and consecrated them to be the vehicle of those great spiritual truths which distinguish from all other religions the religion of Revelation. These narratives, whatever we think of their literary form, are profoundly true to human nature and human life, and they lead us straight to the fountainhead of human history. The distinguished French historian of antiquity, the brilliant and learned M. Lenormant, has well said of these early narratives of Genesis: "This sacred story, even without the assured and solemn authority which it derives from the inspired character of the book in which it is found, would always form in sound criticism the base of all history; for, merely considered from a human point of view, it contains the most ancient tradition as to the first days of the human race, the only one which has not been disfigured by the introduction of fantastic myths of disordered imagination run wild."[1] Whatever the view we take of the narrative of the Creation, of the institution of the Sabbath, of Paradise, of the Fall, of the Flood, and of the Confusion of Tongues, as we find them in the first eleven chapters of Genesis, the element towering high in importance above everything else is the ethical and spiritual teaching presented to us there by the revealing Spirit of God. God's glory as the Creator and Upholder of all, the high destiny of man, His masterpiece of creative skill, the alien character

[1] Manual of Ancient History of the East, vol. i. p. 1.

of sin with its woe, but also with its divinely planned remedy of redemption, God's righteousness, faithfulness, wisdom, and love,—are all set in the very forefront of the volume of Revelation, and shine resplendent in those earliest records of the human race.

2. Of course it might be argued, and it is maintained by the adherents of the newer criticism, that in spite of all that has been said the Jews simply borrowed these Babylonian traditions at a late period of their history; and this leads us to consider the question, What is the exact relationship between the Biblical narrative and those Babylonian legends?

(1) So long as Berosus, the Chaldean priest of the third century before Christ, was virtually our only extra-Biblical authority for the account of the Flood, it was quite possible to assert that, living as he did when the Jewish Scriptures were widely circulated, he had borrowed the story from the Bible, and given it the polytheistic character which suited his own religious conceptions. Now, however, that we have the very Babylonian records out of which Berosus manifestly drew his story—records going back to the times of Abraham, if not earlier—that explanation is no longer admissible. Berosus, it is now plain beyond dispute, took his story from the sacred books of Babylon.

(2) If, then, these Babylonian traditions are not derived in any of their forms from the Jewish Scriptures, may not the writers of the Jewish Scriptures have borrowed from them? Granting

this to be a possible view, at what time would a Hebrew writer have the most likely opportunities of putting into those high spiritual and monotheistic moulds the legends and traditions of Babylonia? The answer given by the more advanced of the newer critics is, the time of the Exile. It is to that period that they in fact assign the whole of what we call the early literature of Israel. It is a corner-stone of the newer criticism that "the Prophets are earlier than the Law." And because in the writings of the Prophets, beginning with Amos about the middle of the eighth century, there is scarcely any reference to the Creation, or the Flood, or the Patriarchs, they maintain that these early traditions of Israel, as they now appear in the Book of Genesis, had either not come into existence, or at least had not been placed in a written setting. It was in Babylon, according to this theory, that the Jewish people obtained the materials for the earliest records of their religion. The Hebrews of pre-Mosaic times, and even of later times, were little better, according to this view, than fetish worshippers. Now Asshurbanipal, as we have seen, not so long before the Exile had made a great collection of texts, the chief subject of which was those very cosmogonies to which we have referred. Mr George Smith believed the Creation Epos, for example, to have been composed by Asshurbanipal's scribes, although its constituent materials went back to a far higher antiquity. What more likely than that the Hebrew writers derived their materials from some of those versions of the Creation and the

Flood story which may have been current in the time of the Exile, and, if so, accessible to the Hebrew captives as they wept by the rivers of Babylon? At what other time was the Hebrew mind better prepared by the profession of a strict monotheism to sift the Babylonian cosmogonies of their materialistic and polytheistic elements?

This theory, plausible as it is, has, as it seems to me, insuperable difficulties to encounter. It is in the highest degree improbable that the Jews, animated by that patriotism which we are accustomed to attribute to the Jewish character, and which characterised them in a marked degree in the land of their exile, should have adopted in the way which this theory suggests the cosmological speculations of their oppressors and placed them in the very forefront of their law. It is equally improbable that the Jewish people should have remained to the very close of their national history unprovided with traditions and conceptions of their own as to the beginnings of things.[1] Such traditions, we may be sure, the Israelites possessed long before, unless we are to take all the character and colour out of their history up to that time. And indeed in the earliest writing prophets, like Amos and Hosea, nearly two centuries before the Exile, we have allusions to these traditions,—there is a back-

[1] Speaking of the composition of the Psalms, Professor Robertson says: "If we are to assume that so simple a cosmogony as that of Psalm viii., and so obvious a parallel word to heaven as *firmament*, . . . were unknown to the Hebrews till the period of the Exile, we run the risk of not only attenuating the ideas of the time, but even of depriving the people of a working vocabulary."—Poetry and Religion of the Psalms, p. 63.

ground constituted by them which we cannot get rid of as we read these prophets, while in Ezekiel (xiv. 14, 20) Noah is referred to as a well-known personage, and in the second Isaiah (liv. 9) the Flood is mentioned as a familiar episode in their history requiring no explanation. That the Israelites had long before the Exile not only such traditions, but national institutions founded upon them, and entering into the very core of their life as the people of God, is obvious to every unprejudiced student of their history. "It would require," says Professor M'Curdy,[1] "an inversion of the whole history of the civil and religious life of the Hebrews, to assume that such institutions were acquired by them at the very close of their career as a nation. But it requires no expert knowledge to perceive that the whole Creation narrative includes these things not incidentally, but as part of an organised and well-established system, fundamental to the whole structure of the Old Testament Revelation." We may confidently dismiss the view that the sacred writers obtained the materials for the early narratives of Genesis from the cuneiform records of Assyria and Babylonia in the time of the Exile.

(3) With the rejection of the period of the Exile we are thrown back upon an earlier time. That the Israelites should have borrowed from the sacred books of Nineveh and Babylon in the time of Tiglath-Pileser, when it is true Ahaz borrowed the pattern of an altar from his Assyrian suzerain and introduced it into the worship of Jehovah at Jerusalem, is a supposition improbable in itself and

[1] Homiletic Review, August 1897.

entirely destitute of support from history. That the Israelites may have obtained a knowledge of these old Babylonian traditions through the people of Canaan, upon whom, as the Tel el-Amarna correspondence has revealed, Babylonia exercised a civilising influence of a very marked description, is by no means impossible. Dillmann, in his Commentary on Genesis,[1] admits this, while rejecting the time of the Exile. "It is really inconceivable," he says, "that the Jews should have appropriated from their enemies, the Babylonians, a local legend"—he is speaking of the Flood—"originally quite strange to them, and steeped in the silliest polytheism. One can more readily suppose that somewhere about 800 B.C., or in the eighth century, or in the second half of the seventh century, the narrative came to the Israelites from Babylon, whether through direct intercourse with the Assyrians or Babylonians, or transmitted to them by traders like the Phœnicians. Besides," he significantly adds, "we now know that already in the second millennium B.C. Canaan was open to the influences of Babylonian culture," an admission sufficient to satisfy even the strictest upholder of the Mosaic authorship of Genesis. Another higher critic, whose point of view is modified by his studies as one of our greatest Assyriologists, Eberhard Schrader of Berlin, pronounces for a still earlier time:[2] "It is far from impossible that the Hebrews acquired a knowledge of these and the other primitive myths as far back as the time

[1] Genesis, English translation, vol. i. p. 262. Cf. above, pp. 44, 45.
[2] Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament, vol. i. p. 54 n.

of their early settlements in Babylonia, and that they carried their stories with them from Ur of the Chaldees. The time when these legends were remoulded in the spirit of Hebrew antiquity must of course be placed subsequent to the migration of the Hebrews from their Babylonian home."

It is now well known that "Canaan," as Dillmann puts it, was "open to the influences of Babylonian culture" during the whole period from Abraham's settlement in Canaan to its conquest by his descendants under Joshua. We have seen that a cuneiform tablet found at Tel el-Amarna, on the banks of the Nile, contained an interesting Babylonian legend. This very tablet, we are told, had been employed by the scribes of the Egyptian king as an exercise in learning the Babylonian language, the words of the text having been separated from one another by means of points, to facilitate the task of the pupil. Babylonian myths and legends might easily have become known to the Israelites in the early days of their history, either directly through the cuneiform records, or indirectly through the Canaanites among whom the patriarchs lived. This, however, is not so probable. It presupposes that they had, as we have already said, no traditions of their own worth retaining, no tribal or national antecedents, which is scarcely what we are wont to believe of the descendants of Abraham. It is a far more likely supposition that Abraham and his people brought with them from their Mesopotamian home those traditions which bear such decided marks of kinship with the Babylonian records, and which embody a conception of God and

of man, of the world and of human life, of righteousness and of sin, worthy to have been held fast by the Father of the Faithful and to have been transmitted through his descendants to us, upon whom the ends of the world have come.[1] If we are right with Mr George Smith in assigning the older Babylonian works, of which the Assyrian texts are copies, to the great literary period of Babylonia, we give them an antiquity reaching at least to before 2000 B.C. But what if the Biblical account of the Flood is from the same source or actually earlier? Lenormant[2] thinks that in the narratives there are divergences which prove the bifurcation of the two from one source to have taken place at a very remote era. Others are of opinion that internal evidence shows the Biblical tradition to be the purer and simpler and older of the two. This carries these early narratives up to an antiquity which is almost astounding.

[1] "The drama of Creation, as it is unfolded before us at the beginning of the Book of Genesis, finds its counterpart in the picturesque—though much less refined—legends inscribed on the Creation tablets of ancient Babylonia. . . . The barren dignity of isolation has, indeed, for ever departed from the ancient page of Hebrew tradition, but the gain is undoubtedly greater than the loss. Instead of listening to the solitary voice of a purely tribal oracle, we find ourselves reciting a canto out of the great epic of antique humanity. Instead of glorying in the possession of a part that was mistaken for the whole, we are realising that our inheritance is much greater and much more varied than our forefathers had imagined. And just as many of the peculiarities of the Hebrew language can only be explained by a comparison with its various sister dialects, so does the ancient Hebrew tradition find its only adequate explanation in the records and myths of the different races of whom the primitive Hebrews formed an integral part."—Rev. G. Margoliouth, M.A., in 'Contemporary Review,' October 1898, pp. 581, 582, where he expounds a new theory of the religion of the ancient Hebrews.

[2] Contemporary Review, November 1879.

For remember how the Flood legend of ancient Babylonia has come down to us. It has come to us in the framework of a great national epic, into which several legends can be shown to have been woven when it received its literary form. That national epic in its constituent materials is of great antiquity. Maspéro points out[1] that the scenes of Gilgames', the Babylonian Nimrod's, encounter with lions, leopards, and other wild beasts, as given in the epos, are represented on the seals of princes who reigned prior to the year 3000 B.C., and the work of the ancient engraver harmonises so perfectly with the description of the comparatively modern scribe that it seems like an anticipated illustration of it. The engravings represent so persistently and with so little variation the images of the monsters and those of Gilgames and his faithful Ea-bani that the corresponding episodes of the poem must have already existed as we know them, if not in form, at least in their general drift. That the Biblical account of the Flood existed in some form or another at a very remote age, as Lenormant puts it, separate from the Babylonian and remaining parallel to it, is highly probable; and that this tradition, with the tradition of the Creation and others, in the days of Abraham, purified from the polytheism practised by Terah and his house, entered into the history of the people of God; that they were treasured by them and even committed to writing before the time of Moses,— is a history of the Creation and Flood narratives and other early narratives of Genesis which the discoveries of

[1] Dawn of Civilisation, p. 589 ff.

recent years and the labours of Assyrian scholars have shown to be possible, and even likely. Beyond those limits we cannot go with any clue that has been furnished to us down to the present time. And yet through those millenniums of which we spoke in our last lecture, four thousand, five thousand, six thousand before our era,—when men were building cities and temples, and observing the stars, and perfecting the system of writing, engaging in war and conquest as well as cultivating the arts of peace,—there may have existed these and other survivals of a primeval history, traditions going back to Paradise itself,—

"At which high spirits of old would start
E'en from their Pagan sleep,
Just guessing, through their murky blind,
Few, faint, and baffling sight,
Streaks of a brighter heaven behind,
A cloudless depth of light.
Such thoughts, the wreck of Paradise,
Through many a dreary age,
Upbore whate'er of good and wise
Yet lived in bard or sage."[1]

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[1] Keble, 'The Christian Year,' Fourth Sunday after Trinity.

LECTURE III.

BABYLONIA TO THE TIME OF ABRAHAM.

It is a prominent feature of the history of Israel, as reconstructed by the newer criticism, that it relegates the patriarchs entirely to the region of myth and legend. Wellhausen, for example, in his 'Encyclopædia Britannica' article "Israel," ignores the patriarchs altogether, and represents the history of the people as commencing when they broke up their temporary settlements in Goshen and directed their steps under Moses back to the land they had left for a while. Elsewhere he says:[1] "We attain to no historical knowledge of the patriarchs, but only of the time when the stories about them arose in the Israelite people; this later age is here unconsciously projected, in its inner and outward features, into hoar antiquity, and is reflected there like a glorified mirage." Abraham, he admits, is "somewhat difficult to interpret" on this theory: "he is perhaps the youngest figure in the company" of these patriarchal creations, "and it was probably at a comparatively late period that he was put before his son Isaac." Stade tells us, in

[1] Prolegomena, pp, 319, 320.

his 'History of the People of Israel,' that no historical recollection goes back to the time of the entrance of the Israelites into Western Canaan; and Nöldeke thinks the name Abraham not historical in any sense, but simply symbolical. Others have even gone the length of resolving the patriarchs into powers of nature and their history into nature myths. Mr Addis, in 'The Documents of the Hexateuch,' says: "It is not indeed the history of Abraham and Jacob, of Moses and Joshua. It is the history—a history which cannot deceive any more than the history deciphered by geologists on the rocks can deceive — of religious ideas." Professor Meinhold of Bonn, in a recent lecture at the Summer School of that university, declares that "for a residence of the Hebrews in Canaan before Moses, and therefore for the figures of the patriarchs, there is absolutely no ground. The patriarchs," he says, "are nothing more than the ideal Israel, their relation to Jehovah being a reflection of the communion subsisting between Jehovah and His people in the best time of their history, about 800 B.C." [1] So long as he deals in subjective and speculative analysis to build up this conception of the early history of the people, it is not so easy to meet his contentions. But when he condescends to particulars, and appeals to the facts discovered by recent archæology, he exposes himself to easy refutation. Canaan, the bridge between Egypt and Babylonia, was, like these two centres of early civilisation in the times assigned to this mythical Abraham, itself highly advanced in civilisation and culture, with a

[1] Wider den Kleinglauben, pp. 18, 23.

crowded population and flourishing cities, and kings leagued together in offensive and defensive alliance. Where, asks the critic, was there room for herdsmen like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in a land so highly cultivated? Must they not have been obliged to devote themselves to agriculture? And yet it was not as agriculturists, but as nomads and flockmasters, that they went down into the land of Egypt. But surely in the days of Jeroboam II., when Amos prophesied, when the two kingdoms of Israel and Judah were at the height of their prosperity, the land was as densely peopled, and cities and towns were flourishing, and agriculture was diligently pursued. And even then in the wilderness of Tekoah, in the Negeb of the south, and on the hillsides of Bashan, there were herdsmen and flockmasters of wealth and influence. Earlier than this we read of Mesha, the king of Moab, of whom we have a remarkable monument in the Moabite Stone, who was a flockmaster, and paid as tribute to the king of Israel a hundred thousand lambs and a hundred thousand rams, with the wool. And of Hezekiah we read that "he provided him cities [or forts], and possessions of flocks and herds in abundance; for God had given him substance very much" (2 Chron. xxxii. 29). It is not surprising that when considerations of this character were brought forward to meet his objections, Meinhold should now declare he lays no particular stress upon the point. But he nevertheless persists in regarding Abraham, the father of the faithful, the obedient, the intercessor for the sinful, and Israel, the champion of God, as the

creation of the fancy of prophets, as they span their legends and provided from the depths of their imaginations an ancient and God-beloved ancestry for the nation.

It is not too much to say that the representation of the patriarchs given in the Book of Genesis is of itself sufficient to shatter those legendary and mythical theories; and a criticism whose methods result in the resolving of individualities so human and natural, so distinctly marked, and so firmly planted in the solid ground of reality and common life, into insubstantial phantoms, may well be regarded with suspicion. Of the personality of Abraham this is peculiarly true. "We want to know more of that man than we do," says Max Müller; "but even with the little we know of him, he stands before us as a figure second only to One in the whole history of the world."[1] But there is another difficulty besides the powerful and well-marked personality of the patriarch Abraham, which stands in the way of all attempts to resolve him into a myth, or to treat him as a hero of national legend. That difficulty lies in the fact that the Bible history of Abraham carries us back to those times and lands upon which archæological discovery has thrown the greatest amount of light. In Babylonia the patriarch was born and lived to man's estate; in Egypt he took refuge for a time from famine; in Canaan, the Land of Promise, he spent the closing years of his life, as well as many years of his vigorous manhood. The history of the patriarch, recorded in Genesis in a transparently

[1] Chips from a German Workshop, vol. i. p. 373.

natural and circumstantial narrative, no longer stands as it once did out of all relation to the domestic life, and stirring activity, and flourishing civilisation of the valleys of the Euphrates and the Nile. It is part and parcel of them as they are now seen portrayed on the gigantic and many-coloured canvas of oriental antiquity. "The devious path of his pilgrimage here on earth," says Mr Tomkins, who has mastered thoroughly the history of Abraham's times from the original sources, "led him 'from one kingdom to another people': from his cradle-land in Mesopotamia, the mother country of all civilisation, to the future home of God's people, hallowed even then by the presence of a Melchizedek and his fellow-worshippers, and into the marvellous land of Egypt, where the light shines on monuments which were old when Abram came thither. In truth his tent-pegs were everywhere struck into ground already rich with the harvest of the past, and broadcast with the seed of all the world's future destiny." [1] Place the narrative of the patriarch's career in Genesis, so detailed and circumstantial, face to face with the records of ancient life and civilisation, especially of Babylonian life and civilisation, so recently recovered, and the hand of a late romancer, bent only on glorifying a fictitious national hero—in fact, bent on creating a founder of the national history—could not fail to manifest itself in blunders which would be easily detected and promptly avenged. That the Scripture history fits so naturally into the framework of that larger ancient history which the monuments have enabled

[1] Abraham and his Age, p. 5.

our generation to reconstruct, goes far to vindicate it from the condemnation of being legendary or mythical. It is not in the light of civilisation, when contemporary events are being recorded on tablets of clay or engraven on pages of stone, when great movements of commerce or of war are in progress, and when the highways connecting known lands are traversed by caravans, and armies, and thousands of busy feet, that we conceive myths to grow up and legends to be spun. With Abraham and his father's house at Ur of the Chaldees we stand now in the broad light of day, or at least in light sufficient to enable us to discern the personalities of those figures, and to distinguish them clearly from the crowd around.

Our aim will be, then, in the present lecture, to indicate the character of the times in which Abraham lived, and for this purpose to give some idea, as we can now do with considerable certainty, of the great Babylonian civilisation down to and during his age. We shall thus be better able to judge of the value of the Biblical narrative as veracious history, and of the Father of the Faithful himself as a real actor in those stirring scenes. There can be no doubt of our concern with the patriarch and his fortunes. "We are by faith," says the Abbé Vigouroux, "the children of Abraham; we form part of the posterity, more than the stars of heaven for multitude, which God promised him in the city of Harrân and in the land of Canaan. His history is for us, therefore, a sort of family history, and everything that helps to throw light

upon it and to make it complete awakens our proper curiosity." [1]

Following the Biblical record of the Flood is that remarkable and up to recent years most perplexing ethnographical table in the tenth chapter of Genesis. It brings before us, though by no means in an exhaustive or inclusive manner, the races and nationalities settled in those regions which we associate with the very beginnings of human history — regions which heard the first promises of human redemption, which saw the earliest civilisation, and which still contain, or are slowly yielding up from the sites of buried cities, the oldest records and memorials of the human family. Upon this chapter archæological research has shed a flood of light, and the cuneiform inscriptions have enabled us at last to set most of the races and nationalities and families named in their proper place.[2] We can only take notice here of such identifications as lie in the course which we have marked out in this lecture.

As the family of Japheth occupy the northern zone into which the world after the Flood is represented as being divided, so the family of Ham occupy the southern. And the first of the sons of Ham that meets us is Cush. We have long been accustomed in a vague sort of way to speak of the people of Africa as the children of Ham, without necessarily connecting the descendants of that shameless son of Noah with the regions of

[1] La Bible et les découvertes modernes, vol. i. p. 111.

[2] For a collection of learned opinions on the value of "The Table of the Nations," see Bartlett's 'The Veracity of the Hexateuch,' pp. 137-150.

the Tigris and Euphrates, whence Noah's family went forth to repeople the devastated earth. Upon this connection recent discovery has thrown a welcome light. Cush, or Kash, as the Egyptians called it, represented to them the region south of the first cataract, and was the Ethiopia of the classical geographers. Ethiopia was, however, a somewhat comprehensive expression, and embraced in antiquity both the African and the Arabian shores of the Red Sea. Dr Edward Glaser, a traveller and scholar to whom the recent history of these regions is immensely indebted, in his book on the 'Abyssinians in Arabia and Africa,' shows that the original home of the Ethiopians, *Habashat*, was not Africa but the part of Arabia now called Mahra, which extends eastward from Hadhramaut along the coast in the direction of Oman.[1] This helps to explain how it comes that a race belonging to the Dark Continent should be sprung from Noah, who took possession of the earth from the regions of the Tigris and Euphrates. The explanation is complete if we adopt the view, which is gaining ground with every new discovery, that Egypt received the beginnings of its civilisation, like the rest of the world, from the valley of the Euphrates — that the race who at a very early period took possession of the Nile valley found their way thither from the south and east.[2]

Dr Glaser calls attention to the fact that what is called Elam in Scripture bears in the Babylonian

[1] See Recent Research in Bible Lands, p. 131 ff.; Hommel, The Ancient Hebrew Tradition, p. 314 ff.

[2] See Appendix, Note I., p. 318.

the name of Kashu; and Friedrich Delitzsch shows that it is this region, and not Ethiopia (as it is wrongly interpreted in the Authorised Version), that was compassed by the second river of Paradise, Gihon.[1] Both Glaser and Delitzsch have demonstrated the identity of the two—at least the original relationship of the Egyptian Kash and the Babylonian Kashu. The north-east corner of Africa must have been colonised in very early times by Elamites, who had to cross Arabia on their way thither. This view, which is adopted by Hommel, is supported by linguistic considerations as well, so that the much-discussed Kashites, of whom there was a dynasty of Babylonian kings, the Ethiopians of Homer and Herodotus, must originally have been Elamite Kashites who, under what pressure we know not, found their way to Africa. "It is interesting to note," says Hommel, "that the Bible calls Nimrod the son of Cush, and that the cuneiform alternative for Nimrod (Gilgames of the Flood legend) has an Elamite termination. What the Nimrod epic tells us of Nimrod's wanderings across Arabia must therefore be regarded as a legendary version of the historical migration of the Kassites from Elam into East Africa: Nimrod is merely a personification of that Elamite race-element of which traces are still to be found in Arabia and in Nubia."[2] Without committing ourselves to all this, it is clear that we have in these identifications a strong confirmation of the truth of the Biblical record, and a very interesting elucidation

[1] Wo lag das Paradies? p. 51 ff.; Recent Research, p. 153 ff.

[2] Hommel, *ut supra*, p. 39 ff.

of a point which has been up till now obscure. Next to Cush in this list of the children of Ham is Mizraim, Egypt, a dual form of expression, embracing Upper and Lower Egypt, called in the cuneiform inscriptions Musur, Musuru, and Musri, and appearing in them for the first time about 1100 B.C. under this last form.

The central zone into which the civilised world of early days is here divided is occupied by the descendants of Shem; and now we are brought into the mid-stream of the Biblical history with the ancestors of Abraham, the Father of the Faithful. It was from the wilderness-land of Northern Arabia that the different families of the Semitic race, according to the most recent indications, proceeded to the scenes in which they enacted their various histories. The river-land between the Tigris and the Euphrates was the home of the great Semitic communities during by far the greatest part of the history of the civilised world. The Babylonians and Assyrians divide the history between them.

The Babylonians [says Professor M'Curdy], occupying the region which the Bible makes known to us as the scene of man's creation, and which historical research indicates to have been the seat of the earliest civilisation, made their home on the lands of the Lower Euphrates and Tigris, converting them through canalisation and irrigation into rich and powerful kingdoms, finally united under the rule of Babylon. Before the union was effected, emigrants from among those Babylonians settled along the Middle Tigris, founded the city of Asshur, and later still the group of cities known to history as Nineveh. The Assyrians, then, after long struggles, rose to pre-eminence

in Western Asia, till after centuries of stern dominion they yielded to the new Babylonian *régime* founded by the Chaldæans from the Persian Gulf.[1]

Before the Father of the Faithful left his home in Ur of the Chaldees and went forth not knowing whither he went, civilisation, as we have already indicated, had flourished nearly as long in Babylonia as from Abraham's time to our own. As factors in that ancient civilisation the two great rivers of Mesopotamia occupy a very important place. The Tigris, though the shorter of the two, and possessing a smaller volume of water, was the better adapted to navigation; and the Euphrates, with inundations not unlike those of the Nile, contributed more to the fertility of the great Mesopotamian plain. Indeed, in fruitfulness the region watered by the Euphrates, and by the gigantic system of canals intersecting the country between it and the Tigris, rivalled the valley of the Nile, and was reckoned by Herodotus to equal in productiveness half the rest of Asia. As Egypt was called "the gift of the Nile," so the Tigris and the Euphrates were designated "the life of the land" and "the bringer of plenty."

Now the Scripture account of the origin of the Babylonian civilisation is none the less interesting that it is for most people hidden away in a chapter full of hard and unpronounceable names. In the tenth chapter of Genesis we read: "Cush begat Nimrod. . . . And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in

[1] M'Curdy, History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 23.

the land of Shinar. Out of that land he went forth," as the Revised Version reads, "into Assyria and builded Nineveh, and Rehoboth-Ir, and Calah, and Resen between Nineveh and Calah (the same is the great city)" (Gen. x. 8-12).

This statement, thanks to recent discovery, is no longer the puzzle that it was to the reader. We have long been accustomed to look upon Assyria as older than Babylonia,—the Assyrian period which coincides with the period of the kings of Israel and Judah being earlier than the Chaldean period, or period of the New Babylonian empire under Nebuchadnezzar, which succeeds. And so long as this false perspective prevailed, the statement that Asshur and Nineveh were colonised from Babylonia was puzzling in the extreme. Now it is made plain beyond the possibility of misconception by the cuneiform inscriptions that Assyria, which in the zenith of its power and glory included Babylonia, was originally colonised from it. Assyria was an offshoot of the southern community. Its language, writing, and religion all go to confirm the statement of the Biblical writer that it derived its existence from Babylonia. "Its history, viewed as a part of the great drama enacted in the cradle-land of humanity, must be looked upon as an episode in a much larger and more eventful story, which began at least two thousand years before the founding of Nineveh, and reached its catastrophe after Assyria was blotted out from among the nations."[1] Assyria, as we would reckon, looking only to classical antiquity,

[1] M'Curdy, vol. i. p. 85.

was modern compared with Babylonia. The history of the Semitic *régime* in Babylonia lasted at least four thousand years, from the earliest beginnings which we can distinctly trace to the time when Cyrus captured the city of Babylon and set up the empire of the Medes and Persians: the history of Assyria from the founding of Nineveh to its final overthrow in 606 B.C. extends only over fifteen hundred years.

But what now of those cities in the land of Shinar—Babel, Erech, Accad, and Calneh? Babel we know, because the Tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues have a prominent place in the early Scripture history, and it is immortalised in the Babylon which has perpetuated its renown. Accad is known to the few, who have heard of it as the seat of the empire of Sargon, who ruled about 3800 B.C. from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, and to the still more select number who are interested in the old Accadian civilisation, or it may be only in that fiercely debated question, whether there ever was an Accadian civilisation, or an Accadian language, or an Accadian people at all. But who would have believed that Erech, in the fifth millennium before Christ, was the capital city of monarchs who boasted an empire from the rising of the sun to the setting of the same, and one of the most sacred spots of the ancient world, the very necropolis of ancient Chaldea, whose ruins, six and a half miles in extent,[1] are full of the bones and the sepulchres of the dead? And who would have believed that Calneh, which, following

[1] Loftus, Chaldæa and Susiana, p. 199.

the Talmud, the best authorities[1] now identify with ancient Nippur, was the site of the most renowned sanctuary of the ancient world, "the oldest temple in the world, the religious centre of the dominant people of the world as much prior to the time of Abraham as the time of Abraham is prior to our day"?[2] Not only upon these cities, but upon Ur of the Chaldees, where dwelt Terah, Abram, and Lot, and Harrân, to which they migrated on the way to the land of Canaan, and other mighty centres of commercial, political, literary, and religious life in the ancient world, there has been shed from recent discoveries most helpful light.

The land of Shinar itself first claims attention. We read that "as men journeyed eastwards they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there" (Gen. xi. 2). Shinar is now identified with Sumer, the land of the Sumerians or Accadians, the founders of Babylonian civilisation. They are called "blackheads," or it may be "blackfaces," again and again in the Creation Epos, and their language with its cuneiform characters is believed to be related to that of the Turks and Mongols. From the earliest times of which we have any record, down to the latest, Babylonia appears in the inscriptions under the twofold description of

[1] Sir Henry Rawlinson regarded the site of Nippur, or Nippar as he called it, as the primitive Calneh—the capital of the whole region. It was dedicated to Bel, and was called the city of Bel. Hence Sir Henry concluded that here was the site of the Tower of Babel; and that from it originated the Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar, on the banks of the Euphrates at Hillah. Loftus, Chaldæa and Susiana, p. 100. Cf. Professor Peters, Nippur, vol. ii. p. 104 ff.

[2] Peters, Nippur, vol. i. p. vi.

Sumer and Accad. As for Accad, which is associated with Sumer in the inscriptions, and which in Genesis is classed with the cities of Erech, Calneh, and Babel, it is believed by George Smith, Friedrich Delitzsch, Hommel, Hilprecht, and others to be the Semitic-Assyrian form of the city Agade, or Agane, mentioned in the earliest times, and to be looked for in close proximity to Sippara, its twin city, of which we have a reminiscence later in the double city of Sepharvaim.[1]

Accad or Agade is specially interesting as the capital of Sargon, who flourished 3800 B.C., and of Narâm-Sin, his son, a great conqueror, a kind of Babylonian Alexander, who styled himself "king of the four quarters of the world." The question naturally arises, What authority have we for assigning to these monarchs such a high antiquity? Besides the indications afforded by the style of the writing and the character of the art exhibited on Sargon's monuments, not to speak of the long succession of dynasties of kings, there is an inscription of Nabonidus, the famous antiquarian king of Babylon, who made careful investigations into antiquity, and was the pious restorer of many dilapidated temples, which fixes a definite date. On a well-known inscription he states that 3200 years before his time Narâm-Sin founded the temple of the Sun at Sippar, the twin city of Accad, which gives the date of 3750 B.C., and, as his father Sargon had a reign of forty-five years, fixes him about 3800 B.C. These are huge distances into the past

[1] George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries, p. 225; Delitzsch, Paradies, p. 198; Hilprecht, The Babylonian Expedition, vol. i. part ii. p. 58 n.

that we are asked to travel; but every discovery of late years, and the recent discoveries at Nippur in particular, go to confirm the accuracy of that far-back date. Sargon, from being a nebulous figure on the misty horizon of time, now stands out with marvellous distinctness among the relics of that distant past. A fragment of his personal history which was long held to be legendary is now generally adopted as substantially veracious, and it may be quoted because of the similarity between it and the story of Moses. It is a fragment of autobiography:—

> I am Sargon the mighty king, the king of Accad. My mother was of noble birth; my father I knew not of, but my father's brother used to dwell in the highlands, and my native city was Azupiranu, which lies on the bank of the Euphrates. My mother of noble race conceived me and bore me in secret. She put me in a basket of Sûr, and closed up the opening with bitumen. She cast me into the river, which did not flow over me. The river carried me along to Akki, the irrigator. Akki, the irrigator, took me up. Akki, the irrigator, reared me up to boyhood. Akki, the irrigator, made me a gardener. While I acted as gardener Ishtar showed me favour. Forty-five years I ruled over the dark-haired race [the Sumerians or Accadians].[1]

Professor Hilprecht has now discovered a door-socket of Sargon with an inscription containing his father's name, in a form that indicates his inferior birth, and so goes to confirm the legend.[2]

Of the early kingdoms in the land of Shinar that

[1] Delitzsch, Wo lag das Paradies? p. 208 ff.; Maspéro, The Dawn of Civilisation, p. 597 ff.; M'Curdy, History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 99.

[2] Hilprecht, The Babylonian Expedition, vol. i. part i. p. 15.

have been revealed to us by the explorations at Telloh and Nippur, one of the earliest and most powerful was Kish. Whether this name is related to Cush and Kash, of which we have already spoken, we are not yet in a position to speak with certainty. Of its king, Alusharshid, we have important inscriptions, and Professor Hilprecht[1] has ascertained that Kish along with Babylon was subdued by Sargon, and the dynasty brought to an end. That the kings of Kish were real personalities is clear from the offerings they made to the temple of Ningirsu at Lagash, of which a number have been recovered at Telloh. One of these offerings is a sceptre knob in stone, the side of which is adorned with six lions. The lions are so connected that each one with his fore-paws clutches the hind-paws of the lion ahead of him, at the same time burying his teeth in his shoulder. The top of the knob contains the well-known lion-headed eagle, the coat of arms of the god Ningirsu and his city of Lagash.[2]

Another of those ancient principalities was this Lagash, or Girsu, or Shirpurla,—Hommel calls it Sirgulla,[3]—now represented by the ruins of Telloh. The earliest rulers of Shirpurla belong to a period before Sargon of Accad; its first known king, Uru-Kagina, dating as far back as 4000 B.C. That he is not the shadowy creation of romance will be understood when we mention that Professor Hilprecht has been able out of eighty-seven fragments, belonging

[1] The Babylonian Expedition, vol. i. part i. p. 26.
[2] Recent Research, p. 77.
[3] Dictionary of the Bible, art. "Babylonia," p. 224.

to about sixty different vases, to restore a large royal inscription of one hundred and thirty-two lines, and out of thirty-four other fragments, belonging to twenty odd vases, an inscription of twenty-eight lines of his successor Edingirinagin. We have not only copious inscriptions, purely Sumerian, but one of the most interesting monuments of antiquity, the so-called Vulture Stele, to witness both by word and picture to the warlike prowess of this mighty Babylonian ruler. The stele, which is now in the Louvre in Paris, receives its name from the vultures figured on the close-grained white limestone, which are represented as carrying off the arms, legs, and decapitated heads of enemies vanquished by Edingirinagin; while the redoubtable warrior himself is pictured in four principal scenes, now with his infantry in the fight, now mounted in his chariot in hot pursuit of the flying foe, again celebrating his victory by a sacrifice, and lastly superintending the execution of his captives, and killing with his own hand one of the conquered chiefs. The powerful political influence achieved by Shirpurla under Edingirinagin cannot have been long maintained. Semitic peoples were already pushing southwards, and Kish was a growing seat of Semitic power. A still greater Semitic power had established itself at Harrân before the beginning of the fourth millennium, and Shirpurla seems to have fallen before these united enemies. Edingirinagin was the last of its rulers to bear the title of king, and henceforward its princes bear the title of *patesi* or priest-king.

Of the priest-kings of Shirpurla the best known

is Gudea, of whom a decapitated statue in diorite has been preserved, bearing an inscription dating from 2900 B.C., and numerous and long inscriptions besides, all in Sumerian.[1] To show the constant communication with the countries of the West even in those remote times, it may be noted that Gudea boasts of having brought the stones and the timber for his palaces and temples from the mountains of Martu and Arabia, obtaining cedar-wood from the forests of Mount Amanus, cedar, plane-trees, and other precious woods from Ursu, a mountain of Ibla, which may be Lebanon, iron from Melukha, and diorite from Magan in Arabia. But what interests us most in Gudea and the other rulers of Shirpurla is this title of *patesi* which they bore, and which really makes them prototypes of Melchizedek, the priest-king of Jerusalem in Abraham's day. The title designated the highest official of the god of the State, in the care of his temple, and in the administration of the territory over which he ruled. From an inscription found at Telloh we learn that a foreign conqueror, who is already a king, in addition styles himself *patesi* of Shirpurla, expressly declaring that Ningirsu himself, the highest god of the city, called him to fill this office. We cannot help putting alongside of this what we read of Melchizedek, who was king of Salem and priest of the Most High God; "king of Salem, which is king of peace, without father, without mother, without descent, having neither

[1] There are several statues of Gudea among the treasures of the Louvre brought from Telloh by De Sarzec, all of them decapitated. See Recent Researches, p. 66; Maspéro, The Dawn of Civilisation, p. 610 ff.

beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually" (Heb. vii. 23). Melchizedek, of whom we read that to him Abraham gave the tenth of the spoils of successful war, strange figure as he appears and strange double office as he fills, occupies no new and unheard-of position as priest-king or king-priest of Jerusalem, but a position occupied by dynasties of rulers in succession in Babylonia, the native land of Abraham, nearly two thousand years before his day.

Assuming Calneh to represent Nippur, we are there carried further into antiquity than on any other ancient site. In the Sumerian legend of Creation, Nippur is spoken of in terms which imply that it was regarded as the oldest city of the earth :—

> "Nippur had not been built, Ekurra was not constructed.
> Erech had not been built, Eanna was not constructed.
> The Absu was not made, Eridu was not built,"—

where it is manifestly associated with the very beginning of the created universe. About 4000 B.C. it seems to have been under the suzerainty of Shirpurla, although some centuries later we find it in the hands of Semitic kings. The city was divided in two by the Shatt-en-Nil, an old and famous canalised river-channel which still exists, and which leaves the Euphrates close to the ruins of Babylon, and, running eastward, rejoins it a considerable distance down. Because of the antiquity which the erection of Nippur and Erech and Larsa upon its banks implies, Fr.

Delitzsch counts the Shatt-en-Nil one of the four rivers of Paradise.[1] The temple of Bel, or Inlil, which is the Sumerian designation of the god, in Nippur, was the largest and most renowned in that remote antiquity. The sanctuary and its precincts were called Ekur, or mountain-house, the ziggurat, or great tower, of which, reminding us of "the Tower of Babel," was made to reach unto heaven. Unlike the temples of Egypt and elsewhere, its angles and not its sides were set to the cardinal points. An ancient Babylonian hymn once chanted under the shadow of its walls proclaims its glory :—

"Oh great mountain of Bel, Imkharsag,
Whose summit rivals the heaven,
Whose foundations are laid in the bright abysmal sea,
Resting in the lands as a mighty steer
Whose horns are gleaming like the radiant sun,
As the stars of heaven are filled with lustre." [2]

A number of Babylonian kings applied themselves to the care of this ancient sanctuary, building new shrines and restoring old walls ; but the three monarchs whose handiwork in this direction is best remembered are Asshurbanipal (668-626 B.C.), Kadashman-Turgu (1250 B.C.), and Ur-Gur (2800 B.C.) Beneath the platforms built by the last-named king the excavators dug, bringing to the light of day treasure of inestimable value. From the rubbish-mounds of ancient Nippur over thirty-two thousand cuneiform tablets have been recovered, some of them, as we have seen, of great antiquity, and others of the period of the

[1] Wo lag das Paradies, p. 70.
[2] Hilprecht, The Babylonian Expedition, vol. i. part ii. p. 14.

kings of the Kashite dynasty, from 1745 - 1140 B.C., casting welcome light upon an obscure stretch of the later history. Most of the early rulers of Babylonia already known by name are mentioned in these inscriptions, and fourteen kings whose very names have been lost for thousands of years have been restored to history from the ruins of Nippur. Scarcely a feature of an advanced civilisation is wanting in the relics thus discovered. It is true they were without the electric-light, and the telegraph, and the locomotive, without gunpowder and the art of printing, although they came very near to the invention of this last with their engraved cylinders, which they rolled across the soft clay of the tablets. But so were Athens in the days of Pericles and Rome under the rule of Augustus Cæsar without these ; and after all, these things are but the refinements and the luxuries, not the essentials, of advanced civilisation. They had domestic comfort highly developed,—the cabinetmakers of Babylonia used costly woods from Lebanon for the furnishings of houses. Babylonian tradesmen knew how to work in metals, gold being used for ornaments, and silver as current money with the merchant, and iron being so rare as to be really a precious metal. They had a scientific drainage system and sanitary appliances ; and they carried out great architectural and engineering works. They had law courts and processes by which justice was administered with wonderful fairness. In art they became actually the teachers of the Greeks, who have touched, apparently for all time, in some departments at

least, the summit of artistic excellence; in writing they had already in Sargon's time perfected the cuneiform system; and in astronomy they were pioneers who had discovered the signs of the zodiac, and, with a sky in which the stars shine like lamps hung down from the azure, they had made observations of high scientific value. In political life there was much to commend among them. Their rulers were despots, no doubt, but limited in many directions by established custom, and they often manifested sincere zeal for the public good; even the slave, though the property of his owner, was under the protection of the State. In religion they had built numerous and magnificent temples, had produced a large devotional literature of prayers and hymns, and had organised a system of ritual and worship quite remarkable. "The great Babylonian temples," Professor Peters tells us,[1] "were often enormously wealthy. They owned and cultivated great tracts of land; they possessed legions of slaves, and hosts of sheep and cattle; and were engaged in industries and commerce. From the position," he adds, "in which we found documents concerning the temple income in Nippur, I am inclined to think that a very considerable portion of the city was the property of the temple."[2]

As Nippur was the religious metropolis of the land of Shinar about 4000 B.C., Erech seems to have been its secular capital. It was discovered by Layard and Loftus in the ruins of Warka, which

[1] Nippur, vol. ii. p. 115.
[2] See Appendix, Note IV., p. 322.

also lie along the dry bed of the Shatt-en-Nil canal. In the Sumerian Creation legend it is associated with Nippur in antiquity. It was in Erech that the scene of the Nimrod Epos was laid; in Erech Gilgames reigned and saved it from its Elamite oppressor. And now from the tablets of Nippur[1] we learn of a king of Erech, Lugal-zaggisi, calling himself by many titles—"king of Erech, king of the world, . . . *patesi* of Gish Ban"—who was one of the greatest monarchs of the ancient East, and who is of so remote an antiquity that his very name has not been able to carry to the times of which history has preserved to us the record. He declares himself to have been invested with the kingdom of the world by Inlil of Nippur, lord of the lands, and he retained Erech as the capital of this first great oriental State, showing that it was the kings of Erech who in the most ancient times had possession of the temple of Bel at Nippur. His dominion, as he tells us, in inscriptions numerous and long dating from 4500 B.C., was from sea to sea, from the Persian Gulf to the Mediterranean, and from the river to the ends of the earth. It is of course possible to see those figures looming through the haze of such an incalculable antiquity bigger than they really were, and if it were tradition only that had preserved their memory and handed down their names we might well suspect our powers of vision. But when it is from inscriptions vouched for by scientific inquirers as bearing the marks of contemporary origin, and from monuments whose style and finish and general characteristics proclaim their

[1] The Babylonian Expedition, vol. i. part ii. p. 52 ff.

high antiquity, that we learn of those kings and warriors of the early Babylonian world, we need have no such suspicion. When we actually handle the fragments of vases deposited by them as offerings in the temples of the gods, and look upon their faces as they stand out from ancient statue or battle-scene, Lugal-zaggisi and Sargon of Accad cease to be mythical and become very real personages. Of the absolute chronology we may have doubts, and there must be uncertainties, when we are dealing not in centuries but millenniums; but of the relative positions of those dynasties and rulers on the chart of history and of their immense antiquity there can be no doubt whatever.

Not more than fifteen miles south-east of Erech, and also on the Shatt-en-Nil, lay the Babylonian city of Larsa, represented by the modern Senkereh, also explored by Loftus.[1] Its temple to the Sun was built by Ur-Gur (2800 B.C.), who built temples at Ur, Erech, and Nippur as well. It was renewed by Khammurabi and others, and restored in later times by Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus, of whom numerous bricks were found by Loftus. It was Dungi, the son of this Ur-Gur, who dethroned the last *patesi* of Shirpurla and called himself the king of the four quarters of the world—a circumstance which Hommel[2] thinks points to the possession of Syria and Elam, and thus, as a matter of course, of Mesopotamia. Larsa, as we shall see later, is not unknown to Scripture, for it has now been identified with the Ellasar of Chedorlaomer's

[1] Chaldæa and Susiana, p. 244 ff.

[2] Dictionary of the Bible, art. "Babylonia," p. 225.

western campaign, of which Arioch, known in the cuneiform inscriptions as Eriaku, was the king.

We have left till now Babel, the first-named of the four Biblical cities in the land of Shinar. It has in the cuneiform literature a double name —"Grove of Life," which is the oldest of all, and appears in Accadian and Sumerian texts as the name in common use; and "Gate of God," which represents the Semitic designation of the city as Babilu. The great deity of Babylon was Merodach, called also by pre-eminence Bel, the Lord. Merodach's chief temple was called Esagila—"high-towering house"—and was of great antiquity. The Sumerian version of the Creation story, which we have quoted for Nippur and Erech, speaks of Babylon also:—

"As for the glorious house, the house of the gods, its seat had not been made,
The whole of the lands, the sea also.
In that day Eridu was made, Esagila was constructed—
Esagila which the god Lugal-du-azaga had founded within the abyss.
Babylon was built, Esagila was completed.
He made the gods and the Anunakhi together.
The glorious city, the seat of the joy of their hearts he had proclaimed."[1]

Babylon, as it is more frequently called, is believed to have been in existence in the days of Sargon of Accad, and with Kish to have been destroyed by him for the safety of his kingdom. With Babylon was associated, almost as a twin city, Borsippa, famous for its magnificent temples and the special seat of the worship of Nebo. Among

[1] See Boscawen, The Bible and the Monuments, p. 77 ff.

the celebrated temples of Borsippa was one designated "House of the Seven Spheres of Heaven and Earth," a structure often rebuilt but never completed, whose vast ruins are held by most authorities to represent the tower of Babel. Whatever the historical facts associating Babel with the confusion of tongues, it is certain from the inscriptions that the land of Shinar even in primitive times was a country with a great intermixture of peoples and a decided diversity of language. "Its earlier history thus resembled its later, for it was always a gathering-place of the nations. It was thus quite natural that it should be fixed upon as the point from which post-diluvian mankind spread."[1] Thus far, however, no tradition of the confusion of tongues has been found among the Assyrians and Babylonians. In default of this we have a perfect illustration of the tower of Babel in the ziggurats, or terraced towers, which were such a feature of Babylonian temples. They remind us by their materials and their configuration of the scene described in the eleventh chapter of Genesis, when the survivors of the Flood "said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them throughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime [or pitch] had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven" (Gen. xi. 3, 4). The upper storey of these seven-terraced towers—Herodotus tells us the temple of Babylon, destroyed only a little before his day, had eight terraces—was specially set apart as the dwelling-place of the

[1] Dillmann, Genesis, vol. i. p. 387.

god, and we wonder whether it can be any reminiscence of "the mountain-house," as it was called, of Bel in Babylon when we read in the Book of Ezekiel (xliii. 12): "This is the law of the house: Upon the top of the mountain the whole limit thereof round about shall be most holy." The vicissitudes of Babylon from that first destruction in the grey dawn of history by Sargon of Accad to the days of its splendour as the residence of Khammurabi and the capital of Babylonia, and thence through dynasties of Kashite, Pashite, and Elamite kings to its cruel overthrow by Sennacherib three thousand years and more from Sargon's day—and again from its restoration to more than its former splendour under Nebuchadnezzar to the time when Cyrus got possession of it without drawing the sword, and thence to what we call modern times, when all that remains of it are those ruins which lie in such profusion around the modern Hillah on the Euphrates,—form one of the most crowded and wonderful chapters in the annals of the world, and can now be traced with a clearness and to an antiquity undreamt of before.

Great as is the place which Babylon has occupied in the world's history beyond all the cities in the land of Shinar, its glory in those far-back times was eclipsed by the famous city of Ur. Its very name, signifying city, marks its pre-eminence. It was a great emporium of trade: the ships of Ur brought the products of southern Arabia to Babylonia, and, it may be, even traded with the land of Egypt. Long before it could be called Ur of the Chaldees, two thousand years at least before

Abraham heard the call of God to go forth from home and kindred there, the city of Ur was the most important commercial city of Lower Babylonia, the chief seat of the worship of the Moon-god, Sin, and the capital of a dynasty which ruled with undisputed sway over the whole of Babylonia, and to regions far beyond. It was, like Erech, a great burial-city—a sacred resting-place—where the dead were gathered in multitudes, and interred with great care and devotion. As a centre of commerce, of political power, of advanced art and culture, and of ancient religion, Ur was early distinguished. It is now represented by the ruins of Mugheir—having been identified by Sir Henry Rawlinson and Mr W. K. Loftus by means of bricks and clay cylinders bearing the name of Uru, and the legend, "To Sin, his king Urbau, king of Ur, his house built and the wall of Ur built." It lay on the south side of the Euphrates, near the junction of the Shatt-el-Hai canal with the main stream, and had the famous canal Pallakopas flowing past it, and connecting it directly both with Babylon and the Persian Gulf. The principal ruin, a terraced conical hill, covers the temple of the Moon-god built by Ur-Gur, for long the earliest known of its kings, and restored two thousand years later by Nabonidus, whose famous cylinders, conveying such a wealth of information regarding that far-back antiquity, were found in its four corners.

But we must now carry the ascertained antiquity of Ur backwards a thousand years. From Nippur there has come a fragment of a large vase of serpentine bearing the inscription of a king believed

to belong to that still earlier time. The inscription runs as follows: "When Inlil, the lord of the lands, announced life unto Lugal-kigub-nidudu, when he added lordship to kingdom, establishing Erech as [the seat of] the lordship [the empire] and Ur as [the seat of] the kingdom, Lugal-kigub-nidudu presented this for the great and joyful lot [which he received] unto Inlil, his beloved lord, for his life." In this king and his son, Lugal-kisil-si, Hilprecht[1] sees the representatives of the first dynasty of Ur reaching back to an early period of the fourth millennium before Christ. Ur had thus a history behind it that we know of longer than the Christian era when Abraham was born in it, somewhere about two thousand years before the birth of Christ. It was, like most of those early Babylonian cities, a great centre of religious worship. In Ur itself at least three great sacred buildings were the work of the great and renowned Ur-báu, hundreds of years before Abraham's birth — the temple of Sin, the Moon-god, another called Bit-timgal, and another called Bit-Sareser. Polytheism was everywhere rampant. "Polytheism," says Mr Tomkins,[2] "was stamped on the earth in temples and towers, and the warlike or beneficent works of kings. Rimmon was the patron of the all-important irrigation; Sin of brickmaking and building; Nergal of war. Polytheism glittered in scrolls of light in the constellations of the firmament; it measured days and months and years and cycles, and by its auguries of good or ill decided the least ways of human life

[1] The Babylonian Expedition, p. 57 ff.
[2] Abraham and his Age, p. 25.

and the greatest collisions of the nations." Two thousand years before the Christian era, we are told, the deities of Babylonia were definitely connected into a system which continued with little change down to the close of the kingdom. This was the system of which Abraham's immediate ancestors were adherents, as Joshua declared to the Israelites after the conquest of the land: "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood [Euphrates] in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor, and they served other gods" (Josh. xxiv. 2). It was the worship of the Moon, as we have seen, to which Ur of the Chaldees was devoted; and it is a singular coincidence that Harrân, where Terah, and Abram, and Lot, and Sarai, Abram's wife, halted for a time on the way to Canaan, was the other great centre in early Babylonia of the worship of the Moon.[1] There were six hundred miles to be traversed between Ur and Harrân; but "the common worship of the Moon-god," as Professor Sayce remarks,[2] "must have formed a special bond of union, and the citizen of Ur would have found in Harrân a welcome and all that he was accustomed to at home. That Terah should have settled in Harrân, therefore, was very natural." The welcome to Harrân and the detention there may mean that Terah continued a worshipper of the Moon-god, in whose city he died, and under the shadow of whose temple he was likely buried, al-

[1] Compare Rev. G. Margoliouth in 'Contemporary Review,' October 1898.

[2] Expository Times, May 1897, p. 357.

though we hear Laban in a later generation appealing to the God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, to judge between himself and Jacob. That Abram's brother, Nahor, and his family followed him to Harrân we know, because Harrân is called the city of Nahor; and that Nahor became a worshipper of Jehovah is clear from the later history.

And now, as God had called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees at the first, He called him again when that strong earthly tie was severed, and sent him forth "into the land of the stranger and the unknown regions of Martu, toward the sea of the setting sun." Not that those western lands were by any means to the Babylonians of Abraham's days the *terra incognita* we often imagine, or that Abraham was a Columbus called forth to discover a new world. There appear to have been Amorite or Canaanite settlements in Babylonia, where foreigners were under the protection of the State, and allowed to acquire land and carry on trade. Names like Ishmael and Abdiel, even Jacob-el and Joseph-el, are found on contract tablets of that age.[1] There were great highways of international communication which stood open between east and west, between the valley of the Euphrates and the valley of the Nile, from the first dawn of history—highways now, we may say, deserted, but in that age traversed by caravans and by armies, by ambassadors and merchants and herdsmen. The traffic along them must have been considerable. A goodly Babylonish garment among the spoils of Jericho is now seen to

[1] Hommel, Ancient Hebrew Tradition, p. 96.

be the most natural thing in the world. Moreover, when the Patriarch would come to the land of Canaan—whether by Damascus, where later Jewish tradition made him a king, or by Aleppo and Hamath, more to the north—he would not find it entirely given over to flocks and herds, to shepherds and Bedawin. He would find settled communities in the fertile plains and valleys, and in the plain of Jordan he would find flourishing and powerful cities. In Egypt, as we shall see, he would find a civilisation and a culture and a religious life rivalling in every respect the civilisation and religious life he had left behind.

We have seen, then, that it was in the heart of an ancient civilisation, in the midst of historic cities with long dynasties of powerful kings, that Abraham was born and cradled; and that it was to countries scarcely less rich in historic traditions and in glorious annals, and in the products of intellectual and religious life, that he came when he left the shores of the Eastern Sea. Such conditions were surely the most unfavourable that could be imagined for the growth of the legendary or mythical figure which the critical hypothesis presupposes. So far from the name of Abraham having been invented by an Israelite of the later days of the nation to give symbolic dignity to this fictitious Father of the Faithful, it is now clearly established that the very name Abram was as old in Babylonia as the time of the Patriarch. In the reign of the great Babylonian King Khammurabi, one of the witnesses to a deed is designated the

Amorite, the son of Abiramu.[1] In the days of Esarhaddon there was at the Court of Nineveh an officer, mentioned in the Eponym Canon, who bore the identical name of Abram.

But we have left to the last the portion of the story of the Patriarch which witnesses so strikingly to his historic character—viz., the episode of Chedorlaomer's campaign, and the part which Abraham took in the overthrow of that Eastern invader. So far from that campaign having been invented for the glorification of Abraham by the romancer or the prophetic enthusiast of a later day, it becomes itself a powerful witness, now that the light of the monuments and of independent testimony has been thrown upon it, in favour of the veracious character of the whole narrative of the Patriarch's life. The story of Chedorlaomer's campaign has all along been a puzzle to the advanced critics. Schultz says with every appearance of candour: "We must leave it undetermined in the present state of tradition how far the name of Abraham and the general sketch of his life are to be regarded as historical. If Genesis xiv. were a really primitive account, the political importance of Abraham would be very clearly established."[2] But how are we to determine whether it is a really primitive account? Surely, by the consistency of its descriptions and details with all that we know of the contemporary history of the period, and by any marks that it may possess of being itself a contemporary record. So long as Chedorlaomer

[1] Hommel, Geschichte des Morgenlandes, p. 62 n.
[2] Schultz, Old Testament Theology, vol. i. p. 95.

was merely a mouth-filling name like "the blessed word" Mesopotamia, and so long as the other names of kings and peoples were unknown to classical or any other independent records, it was possible to describe the whole story as a fiction. It is different now. The discoveries of Assyriologists and the patient research of scholars have identified nearly the whole of the personages and peoples here concerned. Professor Maspéro says of the passage as a whole: "From the outset Assyriologists have never doubted the historical accuracy of this chapter, and they have connected the facts which it contains with those which seem to be revealed by the Assyrian documents."[1] The Scripture narrative runs as follows: "It came to pass in the days of Amraphel, king of Shinar, Arioch, king of Ellasar, Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, and Tidal, king of Nations" (Goyim it should be rendered, and Goyim may well represent the Guti of the inscriptions), "that these kings made war against the kings of the Jordan valley, and reduced them to subjection. Twelve years" these beaten kings "served Chedorlaomer, and in the thirteenth they rebelled. And in the fourteenth year" Chedorlaomer and his feudatories marched westward to quell the rebellion—traversing with rapid marches the great highway along which Abraham had lately come, along the eastern bank of the Euphrates to Harrân, crossing the fords, and passing Kadesh of the Hittites on to Damascus, thence down the east of Jordan, smiting "the Rephaims in Ashteroth-Karnaim and the Zuz-

[1] The Struggle of the Nations, p. 47 n.

ims in Ham, and the Emims in Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their Mount Seir, unto El-paran, which is by the wilderness." El-paran would be the farthest point of the Eastern allies, now identified with Nakhl in the desert, for from the wilderness "they returned and came to En-mishpat, which is Kadesh, and smote all the country of the Amalekites and also the Amorites that dwelt in Hazezen-Tamar." It was from the south-west, therefore, that they came upon the kings of the Jordan plain, lying at the northern end of the Dead Sea, as is manifest from the Biblical account of the campaign. They were four kings against five, but, as was to be expected, Chedorlaomer and his allies were victorious, and Lot was carried off with the spoils of Sodom. The courage and promptitude of Abraham, who was settled in the plain of Mamre beyond Hebron, brought to Lot welcome deliverance; for having joined hands with the Amorite chieftain near, and marched four days and four nights in pursuit, he made a night attack upon the Eastern host with his handful of men, and filled them with panic fear, so that the allied forces fell upon each other in the darkness of night, and their rout was speedily complete. It was on his return from the slaughter of the kings of the East that Abraham met Melchizedek, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God, and received his blessing. Such is the narrative, detailed, straightforward, and circumstantial. With such an array of particulars the blundering of a mere romancer should be easily detected when confronted with independent and indubitable facts.

Now it is true that we have not yet discovered the actual record of his campaign on tablet or in mural inscription by any of Chedorlaomer's scribes. It is not likely we ever shall, for kings and warriors were wont to record their triumphs, and not their reverses. But we have discovered, we may say, every one of these Babylonian kings themselves. Take them in succession, beginning with the suzerain and leader of the host.

Chedorlaomer comes before us as king of Elam, and his prowess is the only hint known to the modern world of a powerful people whose empire, almost as much as the empire of the Hittites, has been restored to history by recent exploration. Step by step, with keen linguistic insight and with indomitable perseverance, the first clues obtained by Sir Henry Rawlinson and George Smith have been followed up; and a Kudur-Lugamar, as king of Elam, answering to the Biblical Chedorlaomer, has every warrant of historical credibility. The story of Elam and its kings is now one of the fullest and most interesting chapters of Mr Tomkins's delightful book, 'Abraham and his Age.' Asshurbanipal, the famous king of Assyria of a much later day, records that when he conquered Elam and took the city of Susa in 645 B.C. he brought back an image of Nana, which Kudur-Nankhundi had taken away when he overran Babylon 1635 years before, bringing the date of this Elamite monarch up to 2280 B.C. Here, then, was the first instalment of the name desired, Kudur being the Elamite word for "servant"; and as it appeared there was an Elamite

goddess Lugamar, it was plain that a name was possible, Kudur-Lugamar meaning "servant of Lugamar." A later Elamite prince, bearing the name of Kudur-Mabug, was conjectured by Mr George Smith to be the Chedorlaomer of Genesis. Though the matter is not yet beyond dispute, a Kudur-Lugamar as king of Elam in Abraham's day is an extremely probable figure.[1] Abraham, Mr Tomkins ingeniously suggests, had probably set eyes on Chedorlaomer at Harrân, returning to Elam from his first expedition to the west with his spoils and captives, fourteen years before the patriarch found himself in arms against him.

Arioch, the king of Ellasar, is certainly a historical character. He is identified with Eriaku—signifying in Accadian "servant of the Moon-god"—king of Larsa, well known to history as a great restorer of cities, temples, and fortifications. Kudur-Mabug had a son of this name, who was associated with him on the throne, though he had as his special capital Larsa; and on the assumption that Kudur-Mabug is the same as Kudur-Lugamar, or even his brother, as Professor Sayce surmises, it is easy to understand how he came to be in the train of the Elamite monarch.

Tidal, king of Goyim, is the least satisfactorily identified of the four. But Sir Henry Rawlinson

[1] See Hommel, Ancient Hebrew Tradition, chap. v. Compare Zimmern, Der Theologische Rundschau, Mai 1898, who says: "In opposition to earlier views on the subject, it must be admitted that the situation presupposed in Genesis xiv.—a campaign of an Elamite king and other princes in his train to Palestine, as well as the prominent part taken in the story by Jerusalem and its king—is, according to the knowledge we now possess regarding the earliest Palestine, thoroughly historical and intelligible."

suggested long ago that we ought to read Gutium, the Semitic form of the Sumerian Guti or Kurdistan. An inscription of a king of Gutium much older than this period has also been found, and has recently been anew translated by Professor Hilprecht. As for Tidal, Mr Pinches, of the British Museum, has discovered tablets, considerably injured, bearing names Eriaku, Tudghula, and Kudur-Lughghamar, as he reads them, in which Tudghula appears to stand for Tidal,—the alliance almost suggesting, if not the campaign against the kings of the west, some other which they had undertaken together.

Lastly, Amraphel, king of Shinar, is believed to be no other than Khammurapaltu or Khammurabi, the greatest ruler ever known in Babylon. Although he was allied with Chedorlaomer in this campaign, and was even for a time subject to the Elamite king, he succeeded in shaking off the Elamite yoke, and in driving not only Eriaku out of Larsa but Kudur-Mabug out of Babylonia.[1] It is even supposed that Chedorlaomer's defeat in Palestine at the hands of "the Amorites," as the Babylonians called them, under the leadership of Abram, the Hebrew, may have offered to Khammurabi the occasion he needed to raise the standard of revolt. At any rate, Khammurabi attained the

[1] On a tablet discovered in the Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople, and brought originally from Senkereh, the site of Larsa or Ellasar, Dr Scheil has read how Khammurabi acknowledges to a certain Sin-Idinnam his "valour in the day of Kudur-Lughghamar's defeat." This reading, however, is now shown to be based upon a misapprehension.—See 'The Letters and Inscriptions of Khammurabi,' by Mr L. W. King of the British Museum. See Appendix, Note V., p. 322.

supremacy of Babylonia, and from his day the city of Babylon continued to be the residence of the Babylonian monarchs. His age was a Victorian age in Babylon, when the empire was unified and consolidated, when literature flourished, and when prosperity unexampled filled the land. It is true there are difficulties as to the chronology, and difficulties as to the general political situation, which forbid us being absolutely certain as to this identification. But they are not insuperable. The narrative opens up vistas into a region of antiquity formerly very obscure; and so this chapter stands forth pre-eminent as a witness to the credibility of the Biblical narrative when recounting the events of Abraham's life.

We have already indicated the bearing of the office of king and priest filled by Melchizedek, which we take as an interesting corroboration of the accuracy of the Biblical narrator, and we shall have more to say of him in connection with the Tel el-Amarna tablets. This narrative, we repeat, bears the marks of a contemporary record—is, in fact, itself an ancient and veracious literary monument. But if this is a primitive and even really contemporary record, Abraham's historical character is surely established. Take an illustration from English history, which I owe to Dr Percy Gardner. Speaking of "the verification of ancient history" in his instructive 'New Chapters in Greek History,' he says, "Every one who has seen representations of that marvellous tapestry at Bayeux, on which is portrayed, by contemporary hands, the Norman Conquest of England, will understand

that it is naturally appealed to, alike when there is a question as to some of the actual facts of the adventures of Harold and the Battle of Hastings, and when we wish more fully to realise the outward life of the times, the forms of towers and churches, of ships and camps, or the arms and equipment of Norman and Saxon." We may appeal with almost equal satisfaction to this literary monument as bearing all the marks of a primitive record, and carrying with it accordingly the political importance of Abraham and his historical character as the Father of the Faithful, the ancestor of the Jewish race, and save One the greatest figure in the world's history.

LECTURE IV.

EGYPT AND THE PATRIARCHS, INCLUDING THE EXODUS.

Egypt was already old when Abraham went down into it in a time of famine (Gen. xii.) and sojourned there. In the ethnographical table referred to in our last lecture (Gen. x. 6) Cush, Mizraim, and Phut are mentioned as sons of Ham. Cush, or Kash, as we saw, corresponded to Ethiopia, while it betrayed the Mesopotamian origin of the early Egyptian people. Mizraim is the name by which Egypt was known to the Semites. Phut is likely the same as Punt, which is identified with the Somali coast. In the same table (Gen. x. 13, 14), and in the same family connection, we find the Lehabim, the Libyans; the Naphtuhim, the people of Napata, near Jebel Barkal, close by Merawi; the Pathrusim, the people of Pa-ta-res, of Southern or Upper Egypt; and the Caphtorim, who probably occupied the coast-lands of the delta.

The race who founded the dynastic history of Egypt did not enter by the north, for their first settlement was at This, in Middle Egypt, from which they advanced to Memphis, where Menes

in the fifth millennium before Christ, according to the reckoning of Manetho, established his capital and built a temple to Ptah. They are more likely to have entered Egypt by way of the Red Sea, and, as we indicated in last lecture, were in all probability originally immigrants from the valley of the Euphrates and the Tigris. The race whom they displaced are described by Professor Flinders Petrie[1] as being of the Libyan or Algerian type, originally inhabiting the north of Africa, and having features akin to those of the people of Europe to-day. Implements, weapons, pottery, and ornaments have been found belonging to this race; and their work in flint, alabaster, and carved ivory shows them to have been possessed of high mechanical skill. Up till recently there was believed to be no proof of the existence or historical character of any king of the first three dynasties, and Menes, the founder of the 1st dynasty, was regarded as a mythical creation. Maspéro declares "he owes his existence to a popular attempt at etymology."[2] His name has now been found on remains of that far distant time; whilst the recent discovery of his tomb and calcined bones rehabilitates the tradition discredited by over-cautious Egyptologists, and restores to history one of the oldest and most remarkable figures of the world.

It is with the 4th dynasty, however, that the civilisation of ancient Egypt comes fairly into view. It is the age of the Pyramid-builders,

[1] See Appendix, Note VI., p. 323.
[2] Dawn of Civilisation, p. 234.

and may be dated from 4000 B.C. downwards. Sneferu, the first king of the dynasty, built the Pyramid of Medum. The names of Khufu and Khafra, the builders respectively of the first and second Pyramids of Ghizeh, have been found at Bubastis by M. Naville, and a diorite statue of Menkaura, the builder of the third Pyramid, has been discovered at Sakkhara. The style of the engraving on these monuments is beautiful; and, considering the archaic appearance of the sculpture and its similarity to several inscriptions of the old empire, we have no reason to doubt that these names have been inscribed under the reigns of the kings. What strikes the inquirer here, as in the earliest known Babylonian civilisation, is the perfection which art and culture have already attained. The great Pyramid of Ghizeh in mass and height and proportions is still unrivalled among the buildings that man has reared. The Sphinx hewn out of the living rock is one of the oldest and most wonderful of the creations of human genius. Nearly six millenniums have come and gone since the Pyramids were built, and their builders, so far from being the rude and uncultivated children of nature, were versed in letters and culture, and could teach even this age of high mechanical achievement arts that have been completely lost. "They appear, then," says Chabas,[1] "as advanced in civilisation as at any other epoch of their history; their writing is formed of the very elements it was to preserve to the end. The system of writing represents a people advanced in the sciences

[1] Études sur l'Antiquité historique, pp. 71-73.

and the arts,—a people of great observation, study, and reflection, whose minds were capable of adapting themselves to combinations the most complicated. We ought, therefore, to feel no surprise to find in full operation at the time of the building of the Pyramids the religious, military, and civil organisation of Egypt." From the times immediately succeeding the age of the Pyramids we have literary relics of distinct value, for the hieroglyphic system of writing was already perfected and in use. From the period of the 5th dynasty we have the oldest collection of moral sayings in the world, the Proverbs of Ptah-hotep. They are now in the National Library at Paris, and though the copy of the papyrus containing them is only of the 12th dynasty there is no reason to doubt that their composition goes back to the reign of Assa, 3536 B.C. From the 5th and 6th dynasties come the inscriptions that adorn the passages of the Pyramids close to Sakkhara, near to which Mariette discovered the marvels of the Serapeum and the sarcophagi of the sacred bulls, known to every tourist. From this period, considerably before 3000 B.C., comes also a historical inscription in the shape of an autobiography of Una, who lived under three kings and was successively judge, prophet, president of districts, commander, sandal-bearer, governor of Southern Egypt, and leader of a band of labourers who were employed to fetch the sarcophagus of King Mer-en-ra and materials for his pyramid to Memphis.

The history of Egypt does, however, flow from time to time through dark tunnels where contem-

poraneous records cast scarcely a ray of light, and from the close of the 6th dynasty to the 12th we pass into one of these tunnels. The 12th dynasty sees the Old empire closed, and the Middle empire, as it is called, begun, the seat of government being now shifted from Memphis to the new city of Thebes in the south. This dynasty lasted for two hundred years, and its rulers, while by no means despicable in war, have achieved immortal renown as promoters of the arts of peace. Among numerous temples founded by the kings of this dynasty and adorned with the highest products of art was the great temple of Amen at Thebes, the work of Amenemhat, of which fallen pillars and statues still bear witness to its former magnificence and grandeur; and the great temple of the Sun at Heliopolis by Amenemhat's successor, Usertesen I., of which nothing now remains but the one celebrated obelisk, which is perhaps the oldest standing monument of ancient Egypt. Heliopolis, the city of the Sun, also called On, or, more correctly, An, was the home of this sort of monument, which expresses so significantly in stone the form and shape of the solar ray. Besides the obelisk of Heliopolis fifty-five others are known to history. Of these, two were carried off long before the Christian era to Nineveh by Asshurbanipal. The Ptolemies carried off obelisks to adorn their new capital at Alexandria,—an example followed by Roman emperors, who fetched Egyptian obelisks to Rome. Two dedicated by Thothmes III. in Heliopolis, and brought to Alexandria in the century before Christ, have had farther to

travel. One of them stands now on the Hudson River, New York; and the other, known as Cleopatra's Needle, stands on the Thames Embankment, witnessing in the very centre of the world's metropolis to a civilisation which has long passed away, and to a religion which thousands of years before our era kept men mindful of the life beyond the grave. From the neighbourhood of the brick Pyramid of Dahshur have been recovered, so recently as 1894, two marvellous treasures of early Egyptian jewellery which had belonged to princesses of the royal house of Amenemhat and Usertesen—jewels of exquisite workmanship, and other relics exhibiting an artistic skill which is marvellous in an age still centuries before Abraham. When we see this jewellery, and when we observe the preponderance of gold over silver or any other metal in the list of these treasures, we have less reason to be surprised at the precious stones and the gold so abundantly used in connection with the tabernacle and its services in the wilderness. There is no need to assign the narrative of the structure of the tabernacle to a writer in the age of the Exile, seeing that the materials so copiously employed in its furnishing were abundant in an age long anterior to that of Moses.[1]

[1] "The East has always been famous for colossal masonry, but recent exploration in Egypt has revealed that there was equal skill in the most intricate work of goldsmith and jeweller. The inventiveness in design, delicacy of handling, and mastery over hard surfaces are unsurpassed by anything in the art of the present day. Their successors in the East of the present day retain much of the delicate touch of the cunning workers of ancient times, but their taste for design is usually satisfied with the repetition of the traditional patterns. The metal-worker of to-day uses the same tools in the same

But if the Egyptians of the 12th dynasty were strong in those finer productions of art, they were not behind in engineering skill, and in works for which it was indispensable. To Amenemhat III., who reigned 2622-2578 B.C., is attributed the Pyramid of Hawara at the entrance to the Fayoum, the original of the famous Labyrinth of antiquity so extolled by Herodotus,—a pyramid with passages laboriously planned and rendered peculiarly complex with dumb chambers and gigantic sliding trap-doors to prevent plunderers from ever reaching the room where the royal mummy lay. But his water-works for the regulation of the Nile-flow at the Fayoum are a still grander monument. By means of a vast embankment, some twenty miles in length, a level area of over twenty thousand acres was reclaimed from the Crocodile Lake, and turned into one of the most fertile provinces of Egypt. It was in connection with this great water-system that the celebrated Lake Mœris was formed and became the natural basin of the Fayoum oasis. So far as Egypt is concerned, it is evident that the period of Abraham and the patriarchs was not a dim and obscure period in the dawn of civilisation, but was lighted up, as it was in Babylonia, by a culture and a civilisation of which we have abundant records.

Before leaving the 12th dynasty we may notice

way and for the same objects that his forefathers used them. The graving tool, tongs, hammer, anvil, and bellows are found in all, only differing in size and strength as they are applied to iron and copper, or gold and silver."—'Bible Manners and Customs,' by Rev. G. M. Mackie, M.A., p. 68; see pp. 69, 70 for the commonest forms of gold and silver ornaments.

an incident, shown in the sepulchral chambers at Beni-Hassan, which may be in itself unimportant, but is of interest to us as a forerunner of incidents with which the Scripture narrative makes us familiar. On the tomb of Khnumhotep, a local governor under Usertesen II., there are represented thirty-seven Semitic strangers, called in the inscription Aamu, wearing garments of great richness, the chief in particular distinguished by a magnificent coat, wrought in red and blue and white—the colours as bright as the day they were laid on—elaborately bordered and fringed, and covered with ornamental stripes in designs of zigzags, reversed chevrons, and circular spots, in striking contrast to the light and simple white linen of the Egyptian courtiers.[1] They bring with them a present of *mestem*, the black antimonial paint which the Egyptians use for the eyelids. The chief, called in the inscription Absha, leads an ibex muzzled and collared: behind him follow his people — men, women, and children,— the men bringing a gazelle, and having bows and spears and a lyre; the women, clad in garments of similar style, having long and abundant hair, and wearing red boots; and the children being mounted upon the loaded panniers borne by an ass. Although when the inscription was first discovered it was believed to represent the sons of Jacob, the scene has nothing to do with Palestine. But the importance of the scene, as showing the reception accorded to representatives of Eastern tribes even in the period of the powerful 12th dynasty, can scarcely be over-estimated. Excep-

[1] Tomkins, Abraham and his Age, p. 136.

tion has been taken by Meinhold and others to the representation of Abraham and the other patriarchs traversing the land of Canaan, and going down to Egypt in nomad fashion, without let or hindrance. And this representation is held up to ridicule, and regarded as a proof of the legendary character of the narrative in Genesis. Yet here are visitors probably from Arabia, of nomad character, receiving a cordial welcome from the representatives of the reigning Pharaoh. It was in some such fashion as this that Abraham and the sons of Jacob entered Egypt; and it is noteworthy that the wives here are admitted with their husbands, unveiled, and seen, as Sarai was, by the "princes of Egypt."

Although it is contended by some that it was under the kings of the 12th dynasty, in the highly cultivated and indeed brilliant age of the Usertesens and Amenemhats, that Abraham entered Egypt, it was rather in the period of the famous and yet mysterious shepherd-kings, or Hyksos rulers as they are called, that Abraham paid his visit to the valley of the Nile in a time of famine. After the 12th dynasty, of which we have abundant records, the history runs again into one of those dark tunnels, extending from the 13th to the 17th dynasty, where the records are scanty. The 13th and 14th dynasties show a long list of ephemeral rulers, whose correct order in a chronological series is very difficult to determine. From the fragments that have survived we gather that it was a time of declining power and deteriorating art, and this condition of things was taken

advantage of by that strange people from the East to invade the valley of the Nile. Manetho, followed by Josephus, identified them with the descendants of Abraham, but his own narrative suffices to disprove that theory. The belief now gaining ground is that they were a people from the far east, perhaps from the mountains of Elam, who, being displaced by movements of conquest or of immigration, directed their steps westward, and poured into Egypt when its power was weakened by misgovernment and internal dissensions. They have the distinction of having introduced the horse into Egypt; although it was used in chariots by Babylonian kings long before the time of Abraham, and it may have been the possession of horses and chariots that contributed to the success of their advance. It is not till the 18th dynasty, however, that the monuments introduce the horse and show it in chariots of war; for it was almost never used for draught purposes, or even for riding, down to later times. It is an admirable touch of truth when we read of the waggons sent by Pharaoh to fetch Jacob and his belongings down to Egypt that no mention is made of horses—the waggons would be drawn by asses or oxen; but when Joseph went up to meet his father he put horses in his chariot; and again, when Jacob was buried it was a very great company that went up, both chariots and horsemen, as for a great State occasion. It is remarkable that the inscriptions make no mention of the camel, although it is named as a portion of Abraham's wealth in Egypt, and of the wealth of which his servant boasted when he went to Mesopotamia to find a wife for

Isaac. This absence of the camel in the Egyptian texts continues into the Greek and Roman times, when the existence of the animal in the Nile valley and in Arabia is vouched for by classical authors, and is most likely due to some religious feeling.

What happened when Greece took captive her Roman captors took place in those earlier times. The Hyksos yielded to the influences of the superior civilisation into which they had forced themselves, and insensibly became assimilated to the native Egyptians in manners and modes of life. Their rulers, as the monuments show, bore the same titles as the native Pharaohs. They adopted the gods of Egypt as the objects of their worship, and called themselves the sons of Ra, the Sun-god. They attributed the characteristics of their own god Sut or Sutekh to the god Set of the Egyptians, and built temples to him after the Egyptian model in their principal towns. It was at San or Tanis, the Biblical Zoan, that they held sway; and recent excavations by Naville at Bubastis, in the Delta, have shown that it was also an important Hyksos settlement. When we are told that Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt, it may be that the Anakim, by whom it is said to have been built, were a branch of that Hyksos people, and the building of Zoan referred to may be that which made it the centre of the Hyksos power when the main body of them had come to Egypt to stay. Of these Hyksos rulers there were two dynasties, the 15th and 16th in the annals of Egypt, and when the 17th was ruling at Tanis

a 17th Egyptian dynasty was reigning at Thebes, acknowledging as it would seem the supremacy of the alien race.

But our interest in the Hyksos lies chiefly in the fact, upon which historians ancient and modern are agreed, that it was during their rule that Abraham paid his visit to the valley of the Nile, and that later, when their domination was approaching a close, Joseph was sold into Egypt and rose to almost sovereign power. In view of the relations between the Pharaohs and Abraham and his immediate descendants, which were so cordial and creditable to the reigning monarch, it is well to bear in mind the separation which then existed between the king and the dominant race on the one hand and the home-born population of Egypt and its ancient nobles on the other. To these last, as Joseph instructed his brethren, every shepherd was an abomination (Gen. xlvi. 34); and this is proved by the monuments as regards the shepherd-race, who are described in abusive epithets, and alluded to as the plague or the pestilence. To the Hyksos, the descendants of Abraham, being themselves engaged in pastoral pursuits, and being of kindred origin, were not objectionable but welcome. It was probably under King Apepi II., in the middle of the 18th century before Christ and in the 2nd dynasty of shepherd-kings, that Joseph came down into Egypt. Of this king who raised Joseph to such honour, and sent such a cordial invitation to Jacob and his sons to come down to Egypt and eat of the fat of the land, we can now perhaps study the face and features, for, according to M. Naville

and others, the most interesting and perhaps the most beautifully executed Egyptian royal head in the British Museum belonged to him—"a fine face," we are told, "with something of Egyptian serenity but without the attractive cheer of that well-favoured nation."[1]

It is with the story of Joseph that the close relations between Israel and Egypt begin, although the Egyptian inscriptions, so far as discovered, make no mention of Joseph's sojourn in the land, and, for that matter, with the one exception of the stele found by Professor Flinders Petrie in 1896, no mention whatever of the settlement of Jacob's descendants in Egypt or their exodus as a nation under the leadership of Moses. Even if no inscription or papyrus should ever be found in Egypt making mention of Abraham's descendants there, we need not be surprised. It is contrary to the usage of all peoples in ancient, or even modern, times to take notice of incidents or individuals that have been the cause of national humiliation or disaster; and it is the commonest event in history for a people soon to forget their benefactors, especially if they have been of another race from themselves. To argue from the silence of the monuments, as the more extreme adherents of the advanced criticism have done, that there was no settlement of Israelites in Egypt, no oppression, and no exodus, is a line the dangers of which have been conspicuously shown by the discoveries that have recently been made and that are still being made. It should go far towards

[1] Tomkins, Life and Times of Joseph, p. 79.

establishing the historical character of Joseph's career if we can show that the details of the Biblical narrative are thoroughly consistent with all that the inscriptions have revealed to us of the manners and customs and life of Egypt in the times assigned to him. Moreover, this should help to establish contemporary authorship as well. An Israelite writer centuries after these times could never have attained the exactitude and accuracy which we find throughout in the descriptions of Egyptian life. We know what blunders Herodotus committed when recording events of strange countries and bygone times. Even the advanced critics are not exempt from blunders. One of the deniers of Joseph's existence certainly enters the realm of fiction when he eloquently describes the robe left in the hands of Potiphar's wife as the coat of many colours which had excited the jealousy of his brothers in the house of Jacob! Dillmann admits that "the narrators showed themselves well acquainted with Egyptian affairs, customs, and ideas. There are no real lapses," he says, "due to ignorance, and there are notes and descriptions surprisingly faithful and happy. The legend," as he terms it, "may have had a certain Egyptian impress from the beginning, but individual traits may also have been avoided as the Israelites became increasingly acquainted with Egypt, which they did in the times of the Hebrew monarchy."[1] A remarkably lame conclusion from the premises! As if the Egypt of the Hebrew monarchy had undergone

[1] Genesis, English translation, vol. ii. p. 353.

no change for nearly a thousand years, as if it had not changed as much from the Egypt of Apepi as the Egypt of to-day has from the Egypt of the Saracens. How could the occasional visits which Dillmann assumes have given the exact knowledge required for this narrative? And where was the man versed in Egyptian lore in the days of the Hebrew monarchy that could have invented it? The Egypticity of the whole narrative, to employ the felicitous expression of the Egyptologist Ebers, is very marked, and is exhibited in the most incidental details. "If we have no reference either to Joseph or to the dearth up to the present," says Wiedemann, one of the most learned of the historians of Egypt, "in the Egyptian inscriptions, all the details in the Biblical narrative—the description of land and people, of manners and customs—are thoroughly accurate, and correspond in all particulars to what is otherwise known of the Egyptians." The ways of peasant life and the ceremonial of the Egyptian court are described with equal exactness and from the life.[1]

The whole career of Joseph can be illustrated by the scenes and incidents, the manners and customs, of Egyptian life and history. To supply the necessaries required for the embalming of the dead, and to furnish the numberless temple chemists and compounders with materials for the proper worship of the gods, Midianitish caravans carrying the spicery and balm and myrrh of Arabia through the land of Canaan into Egypt

[1] See Appendix, Note VII., p. 324.

were one of the commonest sights. Syrian slaves were greatly valued in Egypt, as they were later in Greece and Rome, especially the well-born and highly cultivated, who often rose to positions of influence and trust. The name of Potiphar is a purely Egyptian name, meaning the gift of Ra —something like John or Nathanael; and we are told that in a papyrus of the Louvre a similar, almost identical, name has been found. That Potiphar should in the narrative be twice styled "the Egyptian" was not superfluous, when we consider that the dominant race were the Hyksos and not the native Egyptians. The circumstances of Joseph's temptation are reproduced with marvellous similarity of detail in the Egyptian romance of 'The Two Brothers.' The two dreams of Pharaoh which Joseph interpreted are Egyptian to the life, and can be paralleled from the experience of Egyptian kings recorded on the monuments. Perhaps no people were more given to the observation and study of dreams, or held in higher esteem those who could interpret them. The use of wine is abundantly shown on the monuments. On the tomb of Ti at Sakkhara the pressing of the juice of the grape is seen, and grape-treading is a very common tomb-scene indeed. In a tomb at El-Kab (early 18th dynasty) the relatives banqueting in the next world are represented as talking in a most convivial fashion. Women drank as well as men; and tipsy men and women are not uncommon on the monuments. So close does the narrative of Genesis come to the Egyptian custom, that representations have been found of the king hold-

ing the cup in his hand, with the explanation added: "The juice has been pressed out of the raisins; the king drinks it."

Of the administration of Joseph in connection with the famine which he had foretold there are abundant illustrations. At Beni Hassan is an inscription of an official of the days of Usertesen I. of the 12th dynasty, centuries before Joseph's time, which illustrates the work of Joseph, and, curiously enough, Job's well-known representation of himself (Job xxxi.):—

> Not a daughter of a poor man did I wrong, not a widow did I oppress, not a farmer did I oppose, not a herdsman did I hinder. There was not a foreman of five from whom I took his men for the works. There was not a pauper around me, there was not a hungry man in my time. When there came years of famine I arose. I ploughed all the fields of the Oryx nome to its southern and northern boundaries. I made its inhabitants live, making provision for them; there was not a hungry man in it, and I gave to the widow as to her that had a husband, nor did I favour the elder above the younger in all that I gave. Afterward the great rises of the Nile came producing wheat and barley and producing all things, and I did not exact the arrears of the famine.

To the same effect is the account which M. Naville gives of a scene pictured on the monuments.

> The other day [he says] I came across a picture which reminded me strongly of Joseph and his employment. It had been taken from a tomb. There you see the king, Amenophis III., sitting on his throne, and before him one of his ministers, Chæmha, who seems to have had a very high position. He is called the *chief of the granaries of the whole kingdom.* . . . Besides he has this strange title, *the eyes of the king in the towns of the south and his ears in the provinces of the*

north; which implies that he knew the land perfectly; and that, like Joseph, "he had gone throughout all the land of Egypt."[1]

The gold chain put about the neck of Joseph by the Pharaoh corresponds to the golden collar with which warriors were decorated for distinguished bravery. An old admiral, Aahmes, who fought with distinguished gallantry in the war expelling the Hyksos, received repeatedly the golden collar at the hands of the king. Well may Kittel say of the story of Joseph: "It must also be admitted that the Egyptian element in the narrative cannot be mere literary colouring. It must belong to the core of the narrative. This points to a comparatively high antiquity, and testifies to the existence of an ancient tradition, dating as far back as the Egyptian period itself."[2]

No point has been more thoroughly elucidated by the excavations and discoveries of recent years than the situation and limits of the land of Goshen. We read in one of the most natural and touching passages of Holy Writ (Gen. xlvi. 28, 29) that Jacob, when about to go down to Egypt in compliance with the invitation of the Pharaoh, "sent Judah before him unto Joseph, to show the way before him unto Goshen; and they came into the land of Goshen. And Joseph made ready his chariot, and went up to meet Israel his father, to

[1] Miss Pirie informs me that there is a small tomb at El-Kab with an inscription recording a seven years' famine somewhere about the end of the Hyksos period. If the accepted chronology is correct, it is possible that it may have been Joseph's famine.

[2] History of the Hebrews, vol. i. p. 188.

Goshen, and he presented himself unto him; and fell on his neck, and wept a good while." Although Goshen thus became the cradle of Jewish nationality, Scripture gives no direct indication of its situation. But there are indirect hints of it which are valuable.[1] "Thou shalt be near unto me," was Joseph's message to his father, when urging him to come down to Egypt. "I will give you the good of the land of Egypt," was Pharaoh's invitation, "and ye shall eat the fat of the land." Not far from the court of Pharaoh, and in one of the most fertile parts of Egypt, was to be their settlement. In the narrative of Jacob's entrance into the land there is no mention made of the crossing of the Nile. As little is it mentioned in the fairly full itinerary of the departure of the Israelites under Moses, which shows them to have been but a few marches from the Sea of Reeds. In the Septuagint, which was produced in Egypt before the time of Christ, and when an accurate tradition may still have been floating about, the place of Joseph's meeting with his father is inserted by the Septuagint translator as Heroonpolis in the land of Ramses; while the Coptic version, also produced in Egypt early in the Christian era, gives it as Pithom, which is believed to be the Egyptian name for the same place. The Septuagint, moreover, calls Goshen Gesem, and in one place (Gen. xlv. 10) Gesem of Arabia (Γεσὲμ Ἀραβίας). These indications have led to its being sought in the Delta, east of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, in the district known in Pliny's and Ptolemy's time as

[1] Vigouroux, vol ii. p. 217.

the nome of Arabia. Brugsch had been able to identify the nome of Arabia with Sopt or Soptakhem. Naville, excavating at the village of Saft el Henneh in 1885, discovered that the ancient name of it was Kesem, or, in the Hebrew, Goshen. At Saft there was found a colossal statue of Rameses II., the oppressor of Israel, in black granite, and other remains of that king, showing that he had built a temple there. "The traveller," says Naville,[1] "who leaves the station of Zagazig and journeys towards Tel el-Kebir, crosses in all its width what was the old land of Goshen. This part of the country is still particularly fruitful; it abounds in fine villages, the sheikhs and even the common inhabitants of which are generally very well off." One remarkable circumstance furnishing strong confirmation of the details of the settlement in Goshen is this, that in the list of nomes of Seti I. the great founder of the 19th dynasty, and father of Rameses the Great, the nome of Arabia does not appear, while the nomes of Bubastis and Athribis are equally awanting. "Instead of nomes," says Naville, "we find names of branches of the Nile or marsh lands. We may, therefore, conclude that at the time when the Israelites settled in Egypt under the last Hyksos kings the land of Goshen was an uncultivated district, not divided among Egyptian inhabitants regularly settled and governed, but probably a kind of waste land sufficiently watered to produce good pasturage. Thus it was a district which might be assigned to foreigners without despoiling the inhabitants of the country."

[1] Goshen, p. 16.

Now this is surely one of those lifelike details which are absolutely incapable of being invented, which give a character of unchallengeable reality to a narrative, and which in this case seem again to compel belief in the contemporary or nearly contemporary authorship of the history.

In Goshen, in the best of the land, as the sacred writer puts it, the descendants of Jacob prospered and multiplied greatly: "They gat them possessions therein, and were fruitful, and multiplied exceedingly." As Genesis closes over their prosperity so Exodus opens with it: "And Joseph died, and all his brethren, and all that generation. And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt which knew not Joseph" (Exod. i. 7). From the death of Joseph, at the age of 110,—it was the age also of Ptah-hotep the famous moralist of the 5th dynasty, and the age that rounded in the perfectly happy Egyptian life,—to the birth of Moses, there stretches the long and brilliant period of the 18th dynasty. Of this period and of the fortunes of Jacob's descendants in Goshen we obtain no tidings from Scripture, none in fact from any quarter save what we can gather inferentially from the Egyptian history of that great and powerful dynasty. Things were ripe for a revolution when Joseph died. After some hundreds of years of rule the Hyksos dynasty of kings was ready to wax old and to vanish away. In an attempt to fasten the yoke more firmly upon Sekenen-Ra the reigning prince of Thebes, Apepi

was worsted. From Avaris, the Egyptian fortress of the shepherd-kings, Apepi sent a message to Thebes, evidently requiring that no other god should be worshipped throughout the whole land than Sutekh, the Hyksos divinity, to whom Apepi had built a magnificent temple. It was this demand that seems to have roused the native Egyptian party to try conclusions with the aliens. It is true Sekenen-Ra, whose mummy has been found in the tomb of the kings at Deir-el-Bahri and witnesses to the desperate conflict in which he had been engaged, was killed in the first encounter, but the movement he represented was not frustrated by his death. For five generations the struggle went on. Southern Egypt first won its independence, then Memphis fell, and at length the Hyksos were driven out of Zoan their capital, and confined to the fortress of Avaris on the Asiatic frontier. Singularly enough, it is to the story, recovered from a grave at El Kab to the south of Thebes, of an Egyptian admiral who served under Sekenen-Ra that we are indebted for our knowledge of the final expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt. The old man, who lived to a long age, tells how he fought from his ship in a canal at the capture of Avaris; how for distinguished valour his name was brought before the king; and how he was decorated once and again with the golden collar. Aahmes was the prince who achieved these victories and re-established the line of purely Egyptian kings, and became the founder of the 18th dynasty—himself a potentate of the foremost rank, who, like so many of the rulers of his dynasty, was found among the royal

dead at Deir-el-Bahri. Of this 18th dynasty which led Egypt to conquests she had never dreamed of before, Thothmes III., the donor of Cleopatra's Needle, was the most renowned. He reigned fifty-four years, from 1503 to 1449 B.C. He made a complete end of the Hyksos settlements in the Delta, and led an Egyptian army victoriously across Western Asia. Canaan became an Egyptian province. Egyptian garrisons were established in the far north on the frontier of the Hittite tribes; and the boundaries of the empire of the Pharaohs were pushed to the banks of the Euphrates. We have already told how his mummy was found in the tomb of the kings, and how, when his mummy-swathings were unrolled, and his face and features exposed after thousands of years to the light of day, the whole bodily framework of the mighty Pharaoh crumbled into dust. Of his conquests he has engraven a record on the northern wall at the western end of the great temple of Karnak, and among places named as conquered by him in Palestine are Sharon, Joppa, Gibeah, Beyrout, Damascus, and the strange and unexpected names, Jacob-el and Joseph-el.

We have made special mention of Thothmes III. because his conquests included Syria, and extended even to the Euphrates, and a true understanding of his relations with the west of Asia is necessary for a proper estimate of the condition of Canaan, revealed in the Tel el-Amarna tablets. It was the Pharaohs of these tablets, Amenophis III. and Amenophis IV., who saw the end of the 18th dynasty.

A period of over three hundred years had elapsed since Joseph rendered such eminent service to the land of Egypt, and there is no wonder that the beneficent viceroy was forgotten. Between the death of Joseph and the situation revealed in the first chapter of Exodus lie the expulsion of the Hyksos, the conquests of Thothmes III., the growth of the Hittite power in Syria, the Semitising tendencies of Amenophis III. and his son, and the struggles of Egyptian viceroys and vassal kings to hold their own against powerful enemies made known to us in the Tel el-Amarna tablets. The times on which the history of Egypt had fallen, partly through the Semitic predilections of Amenophis III. and his son the heretic king, and partly through hostile movements on the northern and eastern frontier of the empire, were critical. A new dynasty arose which not only knew not Joseph, but, disgusted with the Semitic courtiers of the two last kings, hated everything Semitic. In the Israelites within his borders Seti I., the king who knew not Joseph, the founder of the new dynasty, saw a source of real danger. "Come on," was his advice, "let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land. Therefore they did set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses. But the more they afflicted them, the more they multiplied and grew" (Exod. i. 10-12). The early chapters of Exodus tell the tale of hard bondage and bitter toil

to which the Israelites were then subjected. It was in this condition of things that Seti I. died after a long and brilliant reign, in the latter part of which he had associated with him his son Rameses II., and Rameses became sole ruler. Under Rameses II. the glory of Egypt's greatest days revived, and hardly any other king has left such an impression of grandeur and magnificence. His reign of sixty-six years is surpassed in the history of the world by the reign of Louis XIV. of France alone. It is true the research of the nineteenth century has discovered his renown to be somewhat hollow. Not only of his warlike achievements, but of his work as a builder, is this true. Wiedemann says:[1]—

> There is scarcely a building in Egypt on which his name is not found inscribed; the number of edifices which in the course of his reign of sixty-six years he built or enlarged or renewed seems at the first glance to be immense. But when we go into the matter thoroughly it is sensibly diminished. Rameses never scrupled to erase the names of his predecessors from the monuments, and to insert his own instead, so that many inscriptions bearing his name belonged originally to other monarchs, and were usurped by him. And where he did not go the length of obliterating the name of another he had his own placed beside it on the pretext that he renewed the ancient building. The work he actually did was done in a scamped fashion; temples had their foundations laid without due care, hieroglyphics were carelessly engraven, the inscriptions teem with errors—all in striking contrast to the conscientious and carefully executed work of his father Seti.

It is a king with such a lengthened reign, a king

[1] Geschichte von Alt-Aegypten, p. 125.

engaged in building enterprises so numerous and varied, that best answers to the requirements of the Biblical narrative. When his wars were over and labourers for his building operations were no longer to be had among the prisoners captured in his campaigns, he resorted to the capture of black ivory in the Soudan, fetching thence year by year bands of negroes, male and female of all ages, and setting them to work upon his splendid buildings. "In the monuments of the reign of Rameses II.," says Lenormant,[1] "there is not a stone but has cost a human life." "Is it possible," asks the Abbé Vigouroux,[2] "to discover anything more closely resembling the Pharaoh which Exodus makes known to us as the oppressor of the Hebrews? It only needs the name above the portrait painted for us by Moses. And Egyptology has written it."

It is in connection with the treasure-cities, the store-cities built for Pharaoh by the children of Israel at Pithom and Raamses, that Rameses II. is found so conclusively to have been the great oppressor. From the sandy hillocks of Tel el-Maskhuta, memorable in connection with the operations that led to the decisive battle of Tel el-Kebir, the city of Pithom has been dug up. There a great space, in the form of a parallelogram, enclosed by a broad wall of bricks, was discovered, comprising a temple and numerous other buildings. Most notable of all was a long building, also in the form of a parallelogram, consisting of numerous cellars of various sizes, only accessible from above, and having no

[1] Manuel d'Histoire Ancienne, vol. i. p. 423.
[2] Vol. ii. p. 244.

connection with one another. These cellars were built of bricks made of Nile mud and without straw, and upon the bricks was found the stamp of Rameses II. The whole building corresponded to the treasure-houses, or places of stores described; and the fortified arsenal or store-city there discovered, situated close to the eastern border of Egypt, was admirably adapted for the provisioning of an army setting out for an Asiatic campaign. The builder was Rameses, and Tel el-Maskhuta is equivalent to P(r)-Tum, which is Pithom. "There is not the slightest doubt," says Naville, the indefatigable explorer of the Delta, "that the founder of the city is the king of the oppression, Rameses II. There is no name more ancient than his on the monuments, and there are no traces of any sovereign of earlier date. There may have been before his time a sanctuary of the god Tum (the Setting Sun), but certainly it was he who built the enclosure and the store-chambers." The description given by the eminent Egyptologist, Miss A. B. Edwards, of the evidences of the presence and work of the Hebrews is well worth quoting:—

> The mounds of Maskhutah may be described as a series of undulating sand-hillocks. In the distance is seen the little railway-station now disused; and here and there a dark pit excavated in the middle distance marks one of the store-chambers or cellars opened by M. Naville. Not only these cellars but also the great wall of circuit, twenty-four feet in thickness, were probably the work of the oppressed Hebrews. They are well and solidly built. The bricks are large, and made of Nile mud pressed in a wooden mould and dried in the sun. Also they are bedded in mortar, which is not common, the ordinary method being to bed them with

mud, which dries immediately and holds almost as tenaciously as mortar. And this reminds us that Pharaoh's overseers "made the children of Israel to serve with rigour, and made their lives bitter with hard bondage in mortar and in brick." We remember all the details of that pitiful story —how the straw became exhausted, how the poor souls were driven forth to gather in stubble for mixing with their clay; and yet how they were required to give in as large a tale of bricks at the end of each day's work as if their straw had been duly provided. Now it is a very curious and interesting fact that the Pithom bricks are of three qualities. In the lower courses of these massive cellar-walls they are mixed with chopped straw; higher up, when the straw may be supposed to have run short, the clay is found to be mixed with reeds—the same kind of reeds which grow to this day in the bed of the old Pharaonic canal, and which are translated stubble in the Bible. Finally, when the last reeds were used up the bricks of the uppermost courses consist of mere Nile mud, with no binding substance whatever. So here we have the whole pathetic Bible narrative surviving in solid evidence to the present time. We go down to the bottom of one of these cellars. We see the good bricks for which the straw was provided. Some few feet higher we see those for which the wretched Hebrews had to seek reeds or stubble. We hear them cry aloud, "Can we make bricks without straw?" Lastly, we see the bricks which they had to make and did make without straw, while their hands were bleeding and their hearts were breaking.[1]

Numerous illustrations of the method of brick-making, and of the menial character of the labour as an occupation for slaves, are to be found on the monuments. A great part of the buildings of Rameses II. were executed in brick, just as the Biblical story tells us, and the ruins of Pithom are sufficient evidence of the fact. On this subject,

[1] Pharaohs, Fellahs, and Explorers, p. 50 ff.

again, the Scripture history goes into particular details, and the details are of such a character that they could not have been the creation of a later historian: only a contemporary writer could have described them with such accuracy and precision. The verification of the accuracy of the details of the Scripture record by the excavators of Tel el-Maskhuta is one of the most undesigned and also most striking proofs of the historical character of the narrative of the Exodus.

When the oppressor found that the tasks to which the descendants of Jacob had been put had no effect in diminishing their numbers, but that they actually multiplied the more and increased so as to fill the land, he devised a still more heartless and cruel expedient. This was that the midwives should kill the male children of the Israelites in the moment of their birth; but as this expedient also failed, Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, "Every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive" (Exod. i. 22). It was under this law that the infant Moses came when he was born in the home of Amram and Jochebed. It could scarcely have been Memphis that was the scene of the exposure and deliverance of the infant Moses—the Nile is there too large and swift for the little cradle; and besides, Memphis is some distance from the land of Goshen. It was more likely at San that Pharaoh was residing when Moses was laid in his ark of bulrushes on the river's brink. If Pharaoh was residing at San and his family with him, according to the ways of the court, the daughter of the king

might readily go with her attendants to the Tanitic branch of the Nile to bathe. The waters there flow lazily along, and would be in no danger of carrying the little ark away, and among the reeds on the river-bank there would be some retired and shady nook known to the people near to which the princess and her attendants would resort.

We cannot follow his history from the day when he was rescued from the Nile to the day when he appeared before Pharaoh with a demand in the name of God to let his people go. He was brought up at home in the faith of his fathers till the time when, as the adopted child of the daughter of the king, he was admitted to the halls of learning and became learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. By-and-by, being challenged for slaying an Egyptian who had maltreated an Israelite, he took refuge from the wrath of Pharaoh in the land of Midian, where he remained till Rameses was gathered to his fathers.

When Rameses died and his embalmed remains had been laid in the resting-place where they have been so miraculously discovered, his son Merenptah succeeded him on the throne. The decadence of Egypt, which had begun under Rameses II., proceeded rapidly under Merenptah, as may be seen, among other things, by the increasing carelessness in the execution of inscriptions. Merenptah himself reared very few monuments; but he had his father's proclivity for engraving his name on the works of earlier kings, and it has been found abundantly on the monumental remains of the Hyksos. His name

appears with special frequency on monuments discovered at Memphis, at Heliopolis, at Raamses, and at San, showing that he had residences in all those cities. So far as the foreign relations of Egypt are concerned, the most important event of his reign was a war which he waged against the Libyans and a confederacy of tribes from the Mediterranean coasts—a war of defence to protect the valley of the Nile from these western and northern invaders. Merenptah repulsed them with heavy loss, and his victory was everywhere hailed with the utmost enthusiasm, his return from Memphis to Thebes after the conclusion of the war being a grand triumphal march. And it is in the triumphal inscription discovered by Professor Flinders Petrie in 1896 commemorating the victory, and closing with a general glorification of the might of Merenptah, that mention is made of Israel — the first ever found on an Egyptian monument — as one of the peoples subject to his all-embracing dominion. Here are the closing lines :—

"The princes are stretched on the ground and present their homage.
Not one among the nine peoples using the bow lifts up the head.
Wasted is Libya.
Hittiteland is brought to rest.
Canaan is captured with all his tribes.
Led forth is Ashkelon.
Gezer taken.
Jenoam is brought to nought.
Israel is laid waste and his seed destroyed.
Chor is made as the widows of Egypt.
All lands together are in peace.
Every one that prowled around has been chastised by King Merenptah, who is gifted with life like the sun every day."

Such is the context in which the name of Israel appears in the inscription. Ashkelon and Gezer are towns of Canaan that we already know. Chor is well known in Egyptian records as the designation of Southern Palestine. That Israel is represented as a people or a tribe is admitted by the best Egyptologists. But what is the value of the discovery for the Bible student? Professor Strack of Berlin[1] sees in it neither a confirmation nor a correction of the Biblical account, but only a new riddle. Professor Orr of Edinburgh, in a very able discussion in 'The Expositor,' April 1897, finds in the inscription reason for holding that in the days of Merenptah Israel was already settled in Canaan, and argues for the period of the 18th dynasty and the reign of the great Thothmes and his successor as the period of the oppression and the exodus. Against Professor Orr's very tempting theory there stand two difficulties: (1) that Pithom and Raamses were built by the oppressed Hebrews in the time of Rameses II., long after the time of Thothmes III.; and (2) that the Khabiri, whom he would fain believe to be the invading Hebrews, are mentioned in the Tel el-Amarna tables as being not merely in Jerusalem and the Philistine plains, but also in the north as far as Tyre and Sidon. Professor Hommel sees in Israel here, associated as it is with Hittite-land and Jenoam to the east of Tyre and in the territory of Asher, support for an ingenious theory that the tribe of Asher and other tribes of Israel had settled in Canaan long before the exodus of

[1] Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchenzeitung, 16th April 1897.

the main body of the people from Egypt. "The early stages of this migration of the tribe of Asher from the land of Ashur," as he designates the wilderness of Shur, "were indicated by the advance of the Khabiri [of whom we shall hear more when we speak of the revelations of the Tel el-Amarna tablets] about 1400 B.C.; while by the middle of the fourteenth century B.C., in the time of Seti I. and Rameses II., we find them safely installed in their subsequent home to the north of Carmel."[1] That detachments of the Israelitish people found their way back again to Canaan before the main body, who came forth from Egypt under the leadership of Moses, is a view not by any means improbable. It is maintained by such a sound and conservative theologian as Professor Strack, and it would, if we could adopt it for certain, clear up some questions at present involved in obscurity. Undoubtedly the simplest explanation is that of Professor Sayce, whose remark upon the inscription is: "Here the 'Israelites' are spoken of as having been brought low, 'so that no seed should be left to them'; and since their name alone is without the determinative of locality which is added to the names of all the other conquered populations associated with them, we may conclude that they had already been lost in the desert, and, so far at any rate as was known to the Egyptian scribe, had no fixed local habitation."

Maspéro[2] takes very much the same view.

[1] Ancient Hebrew Tradition, pp. 265, 266.
[2] Struggle of the Nations, p. 443 ff.

The context of the inscription [he says] indicates pretty clearly that these ill-treated Israîlu were then somewhere south of Syria, possibly in the neighbourhood of Ashkelon and Gezer. If it is the Biblical Israelites who are here mentioned for the first time on an Egyptian monument, one might suppose that they had just quitted the land of slavery to begin their wanderings through the desert. Although the peoples of the sea and the Libyans did not succeed in reaching their settlements in the land of Goshen, the Israelites must have profited by the disorder into which the Egyptians were thrown, and by the consequent withdrawal to Memphis of the troops previously stationed on the east of the Delta, to break away from their servitude and cross the frontier. If, on the other hand, the Israîlu of Merenptah are regarded as a tribe still dwelling in the mountains of Canaan, while the greater part had emigrated to the valley of the Nile [a view favoured by Professor Flinders Petrie], there is no need to seek long after Merenptah for a date suiting the circumstances of the Exodus. The years following the reign of Seti II. offer favourable conditions for such a dangerous enterprise: the break-up of the monarchy, the discords of the barons, the revolts among the captives, and the supremacy of a Semite over the other chiefs, must have minimised the risk.

Without professing to have reached any perfectly satisfactory conclusion regarding the bearing of the inscription, one may express the hope, and cherish it with a measure of confidence, that new discoveries will clear away the ambiguities and perplexities thus introduced into the history, and meanwhile we are not required to discard the Biblical narrative, or to treat it as other than a genuine record.[1]

[1] Maspéro, 'Histoire Ancienne,' p. 286, says: "It is certain that Moses took the Israelites out of Egypt, gave them laws, and led them to the frontiers of Canaan, about the reign of Rameses III."

Professor Flinders Petrie says: "Rameses III. of the 20th dynasty repeatedly raided all Palestine even to Moab. But there is no trace

San was the favourite residence of Merenptah, as it had been of his father Rameses before him. It was at San, the field of Zoan, that Moses had his memorable interviews with the Pharaoh, and announced the plagues which inflicted such varied woes upon king and people. Of the last and most terrible, the destruction of the first-born, "from the first-born of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the first-born of the maid-servant that is behind the mill," a trace is believed to have been found on the monuments. On a colossal statue of Merenptah in the Museum at Berlin, there is represented his "eldest son, the prince royal, associated with him on the throne," as the uræus upon his head declares, "the singer whom he loves, the son whom he loves, who inclines the heart of his lord who begat him, the royal scribe, the chief of the archers, the prince Merenptah." He bore, apparently, the same name as his father. It is not mere credulity to see in this young prince, who died before his father, whose younger brother Seti II. succeeded to the throne, the first-born of the Pharaoh to whom God said, "Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy first-

of his conquests during the Israelite occupation of Palestine. Just about forty years, however, elapsed between the death of Merenptah of the 19th dynasty, usually supposed to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus, and the last raid of Rameses III. Hence, on this view, the Israelites would have been in the desert till the last Egyptian campaign. Their entry into Palestine immediately after the destructive wars of Rameses III. explains the weakness of the Amorites at the time. No earlier date for the Exodus can avoid the fact that the Egyptian conquests are never hinted at in the Book of Judges."—'The Times,' September 3, 1892.

born" (Exod. iv. 23). This threat was executed, as we know from the sequel, where, in describing the destruction of the first-born, the particular is added, "the first-born of the Pharaoh *which sat on his throne*" (Exod. xii. 29),—a detail which may be taken to indicate his participation in the royal dignity along with his father, as we have seen.[1]

With that last and most terrible of all the plagues, the hour of Israel's deliverance had come. Although, as we have seen, the Exodus is without any certain record in the Egyptian monuments, the natural features and the geographical details of the route of the Israelites out of Egypt, as ascertained by scientific surveys and careful exploration, bear valuable testimony to the historical character of the Scripture record. The discovery, by M. Naville, of the true site of Pithom at Tel el-Maskhuta in the Wady Tumîlât, and the careful examination of the ground by Sir J. W. Dawson in 1884, have certainly gone far to determine for us the route of the Exodus. It was from Raamses that the Israelitish host set out — men, women, and children, and a mixed multitude of Egyptian slaves

[1] See references in Vigouroux, 'La Bible et les découvertes modernes,' vol. ii. p. 348 ff. The original Hebrew does not admit of certainty on this matter of the first-born. The participial expression used is evidently regarded both in the Authorised Version and in the Revised as referring to the "first-born" and not to "the Pharaoh," and is capable of the interpretation given above. Dillmann, in his Commentary on Exodus, following Onkelos the Aramaic exegete, also takes the expression as referring to the first-born, but as meaning "which was destined to sit upon his throne"—this future sense of the Hebrew participle being held admissible by Ewald and others. Others, following the parallelism, regard the participle as referring to the Pharaoh, and merely bringing out that the judgment fell upon the highest and the lowest alike.

along with them—following in reverse order in its earlier stages the course taken by the expedition under Lord Wolseley in his famous march in 1882 from Ismailia towards Tel el-Kebir. The road they traversed was in fact one of the great historic highways of the land. Whether for the conquest of its warlike tribes or for the possession of its mines and quarries, the kings of Egypt often marched their troops into the Peninsula of Sinai. It was through the Wady Tumîlât, now traversed by the railway line from Cairo to Ismailia, that Sneferu, Khufu, and other ancient kings of Egypt, whose names are inscribed upon the rocks in Wady Magharah, led their warlike expeditions. Pepi of the 6th dynasty made war with the tribes of Sinai, and the record of his campaigns is engraven beside that of Khufu. Thothmes III., Rameses II., and other Pharaohs whose names are also there, must have led their hosts to and fro by the route the Israelites took, —the very route by which our gallant countrymen were led to Tel el-Kebir by a star.

An important point in this connection is the exact locality where the Hebrews were overtaken and the passage took place. Sir J. William Dawson, in his 'Egypt and Syria,' gives up the Red Sea passage as such, his view being that the sea crossed by the Israelites was what is now known as the Bitter Lakes, which at that time, however, not improbably constituted an extension of the Red Sea. No Hebraist needs to be told that the narrative in Exodus does not settle the question; for Red Sea is no equivalent of יַם־סוּף, which means "Sea of Reeds." Near Suez Sir J. William Dawson passed

over large surfaces of desert, which he was told were covered with water at high tides and under easterly winds; and at levels which the sea now fails to reach he found sands holding recent marine shells in such a state of preservation that not many centuries may have elapsed since they were at the bottom of the sea. He calls attention also to the fact, which incidentally corroborates his view, that after the passage the Israelites journeyed three days and found no water. From the place favoured by this view three days' journey would bring the Israelites to the Wells of Moses, opposite Suez, which thus come properly into place as the Marah of the narrative, whereas the common theory of a crossing at Suez would bring the host of Israel at once to those wells. They are also said to have journeyed for three days in the wilderness of Etham, and then to have come to the wilderness of Shur, or the Wall, whereas the wilderness of Shur is directly opposite Suez, and not three days' journey to the south. The three days' journey from the place of crossing favoured by Sir J. William Dawson would be made up of long enough marches, the whole distance being about thirty miles—certainly not too short a distance to require three days in the circumstances. In his conclusion as to the locality of the crossing, Sir J. William Dawson has the support of Sir Colin Scott Moncrieff and other eminent engineers who have surveyed the ground, and it is highly probable that he is right. We do not eliminate the miraculous from the narrative when we maintain that the passage was probably made on dry land, swept clear of the waters which

usually covered it by the powerful east wind, helped by a strong and long-continued ebb-tide. That there should be such a concurrence of natural phenomena to meet the desperate situation of the departing Israelites was not less an interposition of Jehovah's hand than if the waters had stood up on heaps at the call of Moses. For the whole tenor of Scripture bears that if ever there was a miracle wrought for the children of Israel in all their long and checkered history, the crossing of the Red Sea was such a miracle. It formed a deliverance by the hand of God, so great and striking that it became in a sense a guarantee of deliverance in every subsequent calamity or danger.

But what, it may be asked, of the Pharaoh? It is singular that among the royal mummies discovered at Deir-el-Bahri, that of Merenptah has not been found alongside of those of his renowned father and grandfather.[1] We are not, however, at liberty to infer from this, what is really left undetermined by the Scripture narrative, that Merenptah perished with the pursuing host. We are debarred from any such conclusion, if it be true that there is a decree extant issued by him at a time later than this great catastrophe; and further, that he was called upon to quell a revolt in the south of his dominions which followed up the disasters brought upon him by the Israelites.

Here we take leave of one of the most remarkable movements in the history of the world, whose

[1] Since this Lecture was delivered the mummy of Merenptah has been discovered in the newly-opened tomb at Thebes. See Appendix, Note II., p. 320.

issues have not ceased to influence mankind. That the Egyptians failed to recognise the character and issues of this episode in their national history is nothing strange. No more did the statesmen and the philosophers of Rome understand the character and issues of that greatest movement of all history of which their literature takes so little notice. "That the greatest religious change in the history of mankind," writes Mr Lecky,[1] "should have taken place under the eyes of a brilliant galaxy of philosophers and historians who were profoundly conscious of decomposition around them; that all these writers should have utterly failed to predict the issue of the movement they were observing; and that during the space of three centuries they should have treated as simply contemptible an agency which all men must now admit to have been, for good or evil, the most powerful moral lever that has ever been applied to the affairs of men,—are facts well worthy of meditation in every period of religious transition." Meanwhile the Israelites set forth upon their wanderings in the desert, where for forty years they were led by Moses and instructed and disciplined by God for the great part they were to play as a nation, and as the people of revelation and redemption.

There are several questions of importance which we have not been able to discuss—the chronology, which, no doubt, Professor Flinders Petrie will deal with in the third and forthcoming volume of his history of Egypt; and the testimony to the historical character of the residence in Egypt, and the Exodus,

[1] European Morals, vol. i. p. 359.

offered by the earliest writing prophets, Amos and Hosea—a subject admirably handled by Professor Robertson in his 'Early Religion of Israel,' and by Professor A. B. Davidson in valuable articles in the 'Expositor.' There is one objection which has been taken, which really helps, when fairly considered, to bring out a great fact in the history of the people, and so to vindicate a side of it which has been most systematically attacked. It has been contended that Israel could not have survived the oppression to which they were subjected in Egypt, and that the whole story is thus rendered incredible. The answer to this contention reminds us that the Israelites had in their religion, with the social organisation of which it was the inspiration, a powerful principle of cohesion. Wherever and howsoever placed, they must have cherished those lofty religious truths revealed to their great progenitor, the Father of the Faithful, and given to him as a precious heritage for his descendants. That these truths had already been wrought into the texture of their thought and life, and had become the groundwork of their social economy and religious worship, thus knitting them into a compact and indestructible unity, is the natural and sufficient explanation of their tenacity and endurance. From the beginning until now, "Nec tamen consumebatur" is seen to be the fittest motto for the national life of Israel.

LECTURE V.

CANAAN AND ITS NEIGHBOURS IN THE TEL EL-AMARNA TABLETS.

Up to this point our attention has been confined to the two great river-lands of the ancient world,—Babylonia between the Tigris and the Euphrates, and Egypt "the gift of the Nile"; the one the mother-country of all civilisation and the cradle-land of the Father of the Faithful, the other the home of his descendants for some hundreds of years, where they passed through the fire of affliction and oppression and were moulded into a nation. It was neither among the mighty cities of Babylonia nor among the ancient monuments of Egypt that Israel was to play its predestined part in the history of mankind. It was in the little mountain-land of Canaan, lying between the Mediterranean and the Desert and stretching from Mount Hermon to the River of Egypt, that the history of Israel, through which God has been pleased to reveal His will and grace to mankind, was enacted. The land of Canaan had been the goal, as we have seen, of the military and commercial ambitions of the rulers of Babylonia from Lugal-zaggisi in the fifth

millennium before Christ to Nebuchadnezzar. It was coveted by Egypt partly because its possession would rid it of the incursions of troublesome neighbours, and partly, too, because it lay on the highroad to the fertile plains and wealthy cities of the Eastern River-land. But Canaan is not exhibited either in the Scripture history or on the monuments as the sole barrier to Egyptian ambition and Babylonian aggression. The history of the Phœnicians, the Hittites, the Syrians, is closely interwoven with that of Israel; and the cities of Tyre and Sidon, Carchemish and Damascus, as well as Jerusalem, play each its own part in the political, commercial, and religious history of its respective people.

From the time of the going down into Egypt to the conquest of Canaan by the returning descendants of Abraham under Joshua, we learn nothing, or next to nothing, from Scripture of the nations who inhabited the land. The Hittite and the Amorite and the Jebusite had been in possession as in the days of Abraham, but how it fared with them and the neighbouring peoples in the interval between, and what development they had attained in social, political, and religious life, there is nothing in Scripture to show. Egyptian records have something to say of them, and especially of the Hittites and the part they played in the wars of Thothmes III., and Rameses II. and his successors. The Egyptian occupation of Canaan and the neighbouring countries as far as the Euphrates is written in the copious annals of the 18th dynasty. It began with Aahmes, the founder of

the dynasty, whose conquests reached as far as Zahi, or the middle of the Syrian coast. It was continued by Thothmes I., who carried Egyptian arms to the Euphrates, and reached its zenith under Thothmes III. and Amenophis III., when Egyptian power covered Syria, Mesopotamia, Chaldæa, and Assyria, stopping only at the frontiers of Susiana, Media, and Armenia.[1] It entered upon its decline and fall in the latter part of the reign of Amenophis III., and continued to decay under Amenophis IV. The lists of places in Northern Syria and Palestine conquered by Thothmes III., and engraved on the walls of the temple at Karnak, are valuable for the light they throw upon the early geography of Syria and Palestine, and also upon the history and language of the Hittites and Canaanites. At a time not so far off from the conquest of Canaan by Joshua, we have the "Travels of a Mohar" in Syria, Phœnicia, and Palestine, which we can read in 'Records of the Past.'[2] The story contains many geographical references, and professes to tell of "nations and cities after their customs."

But these records shed only few and feeble rays compared with the light which the Tel el-Amarna tablets have thrown upon the political condition of Canaan before the conquest. They are immediately concerned with the decline of Egyptian power where it had once been supreme and unquestioned in Western Asia. But indirectly they bear a testi-

[1] Flinders Petrie, Syria and Egypt, p. 21 ff. "At no period can we place the power of Egypt higher than it was under Amenhotep III., lord of the two great cradles of civilisation, the narrow valley of the Nile, and the plains and highlands of Mesopotamia."

[2] Vol. ii. p. 107 ff.

mony which revolutionises all our previous conceptions of the history of those times. That Babylonia exercised sovereignty over those regions, more or less continuous and complete, is shown not only by the story of Chedorlaomer in the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, but by the records which we now possess of many successful expeditions to "the lands of the west," conducted by Lugal-zaggisi, Sargon of Accad, and other great Babylonian rulers. It was under the shelter of such a suzerainty that the Babylonian language and writing took such firm root and spread so widely in Western Asia. For the Babylonian language was employed in those regions not merely as a diplomatic convenience, but for the ordinary purposes of civilised life.[1] Of Babylonian supremacy, long continued, over those regions of Western Asia, including Canaan and Syria, we have now abundant evidence. Even the strange and powerful Hittite people came under the intellectual influence of Babylonia, and used the Babylonian character for their still mysterious and untranslatable language. When the higher critics assert, in order to back up their theories of the legendary character of the pre-Mosaic narratives, that they arose at a time prior to all knowledge of writing,—a time when in civilised countries writing was only beginning to be used for the most important matters of State,[2] we can now confront them with this correspondence. Here is writing perfectly developed, the

[1] Professor M'Curdy, History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 185. Compare above, pp. 23, 24.

[2] Schultz, Old Testament History, vol. i. pp. 25, 26.

writers not mere professional scribes but people in varied ranks of life, and the subjects not simply important matters of State, but the intrigues and the gossip of courts and the quarrels and divisions of officials among themselves. But, indeed, it has been shown not to admit of question that Moses and the men long before his day had the means of committing to writing those family histories and national traditions which we find in Genesis and the other Books of the Pentateuch.

By the time with which we are now concerned, the fifteenth century before Christ, Babylonian supremacy over Canaan and Syria and the neighbouring lands had given place to Egyptian; but the remarkable thing is that the Babylonian language held its ground, and was even adopted by the reigning Pharaohs as the medium of communication between themselves and their allies and vassals and governors in those lands. The intercourse between Egypt and Western Asia in the period of the 18th dynasty was remarkably close and intimate. Among the spoils which Thothmes III. brought with him from Syria was the daughter of the king of Rutenu, who became one of his queens. This was the first of those Asiatic alliances which had such an important influence on the religious and social life of Egypt, and especially on its court in the closing reigns of the dynasty. At this time, Professor Flinders Petrie assures us, the civilisation of Syria was equal, if not superior, to that of Egypt. This Syrian culture entered Egypt from the time when Thothmes established his supremacy over Canaan and Syria to the Euphrates. It was imported with the

artists and skilled labourers who were brought into Egypt as captives of war and made slaves. It came, too, through the women taken into the harems of the king and his nobles, and through intermarriages with the families of subject kings and princes. "The striking change," says Professor Flinders Petrie,[1] "in the physiognomy and ideal type of the upper classes in the latter part of the 18th dynasty points to a strong foreign infusion. In place of the bold active faces of earlier times, there is a peculiar sweetness and delicacy; a gentle smile and a small gracefully curved nose are characteristic of the upper classes in the time of Amenophis III. . . . Being of such a winning type, it is no wonder these Syrian captives were taken into Egyptian families." Whilst Syria exercised influence upon Egypt, the rulers of Syria in turn became assimilated to the sovereign power. As the Egyptian kings married Syrian princesses—Amenophis III. had several of them besides his famous Syrian queen Teie—so also it is probable the sons of Syrian chiefs, taken as hostages and educated in Egypt, married the daughters of Egyptian nobles on the completion of their education. Many of them might live till nearly middle life in Egypt, and in the meantime receive an education which practically made them Egyptians.[2] As soon as a vacancy occurred in the succession in any of those Syrian principalities, the Pharaoh would choose from among the members of the family whom he held in reserve that prince on whose loyalty he could best count and place him upon

[1] History of Egypt, vol. ii. p. 148.
[2] Maspéro, Struggle, p. 271.

the throne. In this way diplomatic and family relationships of the most intimate character were formed between the court of Egypt and the rulers of those northern kingdoms, not to speak of the administration of subject-States, which required constant official communication; and in the Foreign Office of the Pharaoh there was a department specially instituted to conduct the correspondence. Officials were trained and set apart to the work of writing and reading the Babylonian character. Dictionaries and easy mythological texts were procured, by means of which they mastered the vocabulary and the construction of sentences. Some of these exercises have actually been discovered; and the legend of Adapa was referred to in a former Lecture as having been found among the Tel el-Amarna tablets.[1] It was the business of these scribes to translate the cuneiform despatches that came from Syria and Canaan into the hieroglyphics of Egypt; to note on the tablet the date and the place from which it came; and to make and preserve a copy of replies, all after the fashion of that business-like Egyptian people, who, it has been said, were literally the inventors of red tape.

The letters of the Pharaoh to his distant correspondents were intrusted to runners, who were not as a rule persons of any consideration, but had often a difficult and dangerous part to play; but sometimes "king's messengers" were employed, who were skilled in the languages and customs of the people to whom they were commissioned, and who sometimes took upon them the duties of plenipo-

[1] See above, p. 64.

tentiaries in representing their sovereign to foreign States. It is easy to see what an amount of information would be obtained regarding a period, and regarding widely separated regions, by the discovery of an Egyptian Record Office where so many documents of State and so many diplomatic communications were pigeon-holed. It is precisely such a discovery that was made in 1887 at Tel el-Amarna, when "the place of the records of the palace of the king" was laid bare, and its contents, dating from a hundred years before the Exodus, revealed to the modern world.

We have already detailed the circumstances of the discovery, and before discussing the contents of the tablets we may pause for a moment to mention some of the more interesting of their outward features. Though found on the banks of the Nile they were written in cuneiform characters, and were for the most part letters from allied and vassal kings and governors in Syria and Palestine to Amenophis III. and Amenophis IV., one of them being a draft or copy of a letter sent by the Pharaoh, Amenophis III., to a king of Northern Babylonia. They number in all about three hundred and twenty, some of them in a state of perfect preservation, but many grievously mutilated and in fragments. Of the whole find, eighty-two are in the British Museum; a hundred and sixty in the Berlin Museum; sixty in the National Museum at Cairo; and a few in the hands of private individuals. The tablets in the British Museum are of various sizes,—the largest being nearly nine inches by about four and a-half, the smallest being a little

more than two inches by one and three-quarters. The longest text contains ninety-eight lines, the shortest ten. One very interesting feature is the variety of the clays of which the tablets are composed, forming a kind of solid watermark to authenticate the locality of their origin. A letter, the only one in the series, from Amenophis III. to a king of Northern Babylonia, which, from the nature of the case, must be a draft or a copy of the letter actually sent, being written from Thebes, is made of finely-kneaded Nile mud, just like the Egyptian pottery which is often brought home by tourists. Three of the largest and finest of the collection, written by a king of Northern Syria, are made of the dark-red clay found in that region. Five letters written by the governor of Byblos, or Gebal, near Beyrout, are composed of the yellow clay which is common near the Syrian coast; while tablets from elsewhere contain fragments of flint characteristic of the clay of the place where they were written. Precisely the same differences of colouring are to be noted in the tablets in the Ghizeh Museum, due to the same variety of origin. It has even been noticed that between the letters written from the smaller places and those written from the larger there is just the difference of culture that might be expected. The short letters of the smaller princes read as if they had been written according to the form set in the polite letter-writer of the day; while the letters from Tyre are not only at greater length, but even exhibit more spirit and a greater range of thought and facility of expression.

The bulk of the letters are addressed—several of them by kings in alliance with Egypt—to Amenophis III. or Amenophis IV., the former styled in the cuneiform Nimmuria, the latter Naphuria. Some of them, however, are addressed to Egyptian officials, and others are communications between governors of Palestine and Syria, which have found their way to the royal archive chamber by the banks of the Nile. One is addressed by Dushratta, king of Mitanni, the land of Aram-Naharaim, over which Chushan-Rishathaim ruled at a later time,—who had given one daughter if not more to the Pharaoh,—to Teie, the principal wife and now the widow of Amenophis III., and herself most likely a princess of Mitanni, requesting a continuance of her friendship and that of her son the heretic king. One seems to have been penned by an Egyptian princess, probably the wife of a Babylonian king, and is written to her father from Babylonia. Two tablets in fragments seem to be letters addressed by women to their "mistress," one of them apparently being from Tadukhipa or Gilukhipa to Teie, her mother-in-law, the two women who had so much to do with the conversion of Amenophis IV. and all its momentous consequences. Three tablets are simply catalogues of presents. Still another tablet is a passport addressed to the kings of Kinakhkhi—that is, Canaan—for Akia, whom one of the Asiatic kings sent to the Pharaoh to express condolence, possibly to Amenophis IV., on the occasion of his father's death. And one tablet, as we have already indicated, is in a language still unknown, but believed to be written by a Hittite

king to Amenophis III. on the subject of a marriage between the royal families and the dowry in connection therewith.

As regards their contents, the letters as a whole, taking Flinders Petrie's classification, fall into three main classes: (1) Those of the age of undoubted Egyptian supremacy, forming the correspondence of the kings of Western Asia in alliance with Egypt. (2) Those exhibiting the decline of Egyptian supremacy and the loss of city after city to enemies pressing in from various sides, the correspondents being vassal princes and governors of Phœnicia and Canaan, of whom Rib-Addi of Byblos or Gebal is the chief. (3) Those referring to Southern Palestine, the most interesting of which for us are the letters from Jerusalem.

1. It is these last, with their peculiarly interesting revelations regarding Jerusalem in the fifteenth century before Christ, at least a century before the Exodus, to which we shall mainly devote our attention. But the others are so full of colour and character of their own that they tempt us to give them a passing glance. The correspondence of the kings of Western Asia, of Babylonia, Assyria, Mitanni, and Alashia in Cyprus occupies thirty-six tablets. The single letter of Amenophis III. in the series is addressed to Kallima-Sin, king of Karduniash in North Babylonia, and is in reply to a letter which Kallima-Sin has written to him. Amenophis III., having previously obtained Kallima-Sin's sister in marriage, has requested his daughter for his harem, but the Babylonian has replied that he

would like first to hear whether his sister, whom his father had given the king of Egypt years before, is alive or dead. Amenophis, in the letter extant in this series, pleads that Kallima-Sin is himself to blame for this, since he had never sent a *kamiru*, a wise man, personally acquainted with his sister, who could have recognised her and made a satisfactory report, but had, instead, suggested that evidence of her existence, in the shape of a present from her, would have been acceptable, which Amenophis thinks unreasonable. Thus the letter proceeds at great length and with all the tortuousness of Eastern diplomacy, the result being that in another letter of the series we find Kallima-Sin requesting Amenophis to send a messenger and fetch the princess without delay. Kallima-Sin naturally thinks that he should receive an exchange of such courtesies, and he has written to Amenophis with a request for an Egyptian princess to be a Babylonian queen. Amenophis has refused, his answer, quoted by Kallima-Sin, being, "The daughter of the king of the land of Egypt hath never been given to a nobody"; but Kallima-Sin, nothing daunted, has asked him to send any good-looking Egyptian woman, whom he might pass off as a daughter of the Pharaoh, for who at that distance could say that she wasn't a princess? And the letter closes with the threat that if Amenophis persists in his refusal to allow an Egyptian lady to come to Mesopotamia, he would see to it that no Mesopotamian lady should again go down to Egypt. The suit of the Babylonian king would appear to have been successful, for in another letter there

is a reference to a messenger who brought the daughter of Amenophis to the Babylonian Court. As letters passed between Amenophis III. and Kallima-Sin, there is correspondence also between Burnaburiash and Amenophis IV., the burden of which is the gifts and presents which should be given and received by way of cementing alliance between the Courts. There is one letter of the series which is of peculiar interest as being a communication from Asshuruballit, the king of Assyria, to Amenophis IV., requesting gold for the building of his new palace, and basing his request upon the precedents of his father Asshur-Nadinahi and Dushratta, king of Mitanni, receiving twenty talents. The letters between Mitanni and Egypt, written by this Dushratta, and mostly addressed to Amenophis III. and IV., set before us the relations subsisting between the monarchs, and cast no little light upon the trade and politics of Mesopotamia in that otherwise obscure epoch. In these letters of Dushratta, whose gifted countrywoman, Teie, and whose sister and daughter, were all wives of Amenophis III., and whose daughter, Tadukhipa, was the wife of Amenophis IV., we meet with the Khita people, who had made an inroad upon his land, and to whom he had administered a defeat.

2. It is when we come to the letters recording the intrigues and dissensions of vassal princes and governors among themselves, and their unavailing struggle to keep possession of their cities,—circumstances which mark the rapid decadence of Egyptian power in Northern Syria,—that we are

once again upon familiar ground. We meet now in those letters, a century before the Exodus, with places whose names are familiar to us from the literature of a later time, and which we do not expect to find at a period so remote as the fifteenth century. Tyre, Sidon, Beyrout, Byblos, or Gebal, all figure largely in this section of the correspondence. The most copious writer is Rib-Addi, the governor of Gebal, who now makes appeal to the Pharaoh his liege lord for help, again protests his loyalty, which has been impeached, and finally intimates the loss of city after city till Gebal was all he possessed. From the numerous references to the Khita, it is clear that the Hittites were pressing into Canaan and rapidly gathering strength. Charges are made by one Egyptian governor against another which serve to show the collapse of military organisation and the growing weakness of the sovereign power, which no longer lays a strong hand upon its vassal states. To the appeals and protests and supplications of his vassals Amenophis IV. turns a deaf ear, being too keenly engrossed with the differences between himself and the Theban priesthood at home, and perhaps absorbed in the laying out of his new capital to the north. "Who formerly could have plundered Dunip without being plundered by Manakhbiria," the cuneiform designation of Thothmes III.? Such is the pathetic lament of the inhabitants of Dunip as they entreat help against Aziru, the prince of Amurri, who on his part writes to the king protesting his loyalty and giving assurances of submission. This Aziru has an intercessor at the

Court of Egypt bearing the name of Dudu, which is no other than the well-known name David, — not the only man of Semitic race at that time holding a position of authority at court, who, as we have already noted, surrounded himself with Semitic courtiers and yielded himself up under the influence of his mother to Semitic influence.

Of the enemies from without who, as we gather from this section of the correspondence, were taking advantage of the decadence of Egyptian power, the two most formidable were the Khita and the Khabiri. The Khita have the help of Abdashrat and his sons, and the Khabiri have the aid of Milki-el. And just as Rib-Addi of Gebal defends the interests of the king against Abdashrat, so Ebed-tob of Jerusalem defends them against the Khabiri. It is the same melancholy wail that ascends from both these champions of Egyptian sovereignty. Rib-Addi complains that all the cities on the northern seaboard are captured except Gebal; Ebed-Tob complains that "Turbasha has been slain at the gate of Zilû, Japti-Addi has been slain at the gate of Zilû," and the king is inactive. As for Zimrida of Lachish, his servants are seeking to seize him in order to kill him.[1] "As long as ships were upon the sea," is Ebed-tob's lament, harking back to the glorious days of Thothmes III., "the strong arm of the king occupied Nahrima and Kash, but now the Khabiri are occupying the king's cities."

Of all the enemies then pressing upon the vassals

[1] Winckler, The Tel el-Amarna Tablets, p. 311.

of Pharaoh in Syria, the Khabiri are the most interesting and mysterious. They are found not only in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, but as far north as Sidon, where Zimrida complains that his cities have all fallen into their hands, and even in the neighbourhood of Damascus. Rib-Addi of Gebal has complaints to make against them as well as against the Khita. Who then can they be? Some, like Conder[1] and Zimmern,[2] have identified them with the invading Israelites; and, so far as etymology is concerned, the identification is admissible. Professor Orr,[3] placing the Exodus in the time of Thothmes IV., also thinks they are the Israelites expelling the inhabitants of the land and taking possession. Others, like Sayce[4] and Flinders Petrie,[5] proceeding upon a common view of the derivation of the word, regard the name as a comprehensive designation of confederate tribes, or allies, who have banded themselves together to throw off the Egyptian yoke. Still others, like Professor M'Curdy, following the same derivation, make them out to be the inhabitants of Hebron, one of the old Amorite cities, which was now seeking to become the centre of a new monarchy independent of the alien Egyptians.[6] This view, however, is scarcely tenable in face of the fact disclosed in the letters that the Khabiri were not in the south only but also in the north, as far as

[1] Tel el-Amarna Tablets.
[2] Zeitschrift des Palaestina-Vereins, p. 133 ff.
[3] Expositor, fifth series, vol. v. p. 161 ff.
[4] Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 175.
[5] History of Egypt, vol. ii. p. 315; Egypt and Syria, p. 65.
[6] History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 184.

Sidon and Beyrout and Damascus. We need more light before we can come to a decided opinion. One is reluctant to give up the view that they represent in some way or other the Hebrew people. There are serious difficulties in the chronology, and in the widespread diffusion of this mysterious people, which confront us on the assumption that they are the Israelites. But it seems not impossible, taking other indications into account, that they are some body or bodies of Israelites who have found their way into Palestine and addicted themselves to a wandering and warlike life before the nation conquered the land and settled in it under Joshua.

3. It is, however, the letters from Southern Palestine that have the greatest interest for the Bible student. They are mostly written by native governors, who stand in the relation of vassals to the Pharaoh. As we read through them we come upon the names of cities and localities which play a large part in the later history of Israel, as Gaza, Aijalon, Megiddo, Lachish, Ashkelon, Keilah, Carmel, Gezer, Zorah, and, most remarkable of all, Jerusalem itself.

The mention of Lachish is of peculiar interest. Zimrida, the prince of Lachish, writes to Amenophis IV. calling himself "your servant, the dust of your feet," and acknowledging receipt of the king's message: "I have heard very well indeed the words of the messenger of my lord the king, whom he sent to me. And, verily, I will do according to his command." In another letter, written by Ebed-Tob of Jerusalem to Amenophis, the intelligence

is conveyed that Zimrida's servants are seeking to seize him in order to kill him. While Zimrida was corresponding with his liege lord, the king of Egypt, it would be the most natural thing in the world that he, or some one for him, should also be in correspondence with other local governors and officers of the king. What has become of such correspondence? Professor Sayce has long been of opinion that in the Tels, or mounds of buried cities in Palestine, there were archive chambers deep below the soil where tablets like those of Tel el-Amarna would one day be found, throwing light upon the patriarchal history, upon the conquest, or upon stirring events of later days. The correctness of his surmise has been verified in the most marvellous way at Lachish. In May 1892 one of the workmen employed by Dr F. J. Bliss, who was following up the excavations of Professor Flinders Petrie at Tel el-Hesy, the site of the ancient Lachish, discovered a tablet upon which cuneiform characters were apparent. By this time the Tel el-Amarna collection had been carefully investigated, and when a comparison was instituted between the Tel el-Hesy tablet and the tablets from Southern Canaan in the Tel el-Amarna collection, it was found that it had all their characteristic features. It was, like them, of baked clay, dark brown, and nearly flat on both sides. Its cuneiform characters were those in use in Southern Canaan in the fifteenth century B.C., and the grammatical forms were found to be identical with those employed by the scribes who wrote the letters to the Egyptian kings. The identification was complete when, on the Tel el-Hesy tablet, there

was found the name of Zimrida, the prince of Lachish, already known by the Tel el-Amarna correspondence. It is addressed to the commander-in-chief, whose name is possibly Abishiarami, and intimates that Shipti-Addi and Zimrida had agreed to call the city to service; and Shipti-Addi spoke to Zimrida saying, Abishiarami wrote to me to such and such an effect. But for the previous discovery of the Tel el-Amarna tablets this would have been an archæological puzzle. As things are, it receives elucidation from the tablets and adds confirmation to them. There is no reason to doubt that it is the same Zimrida who is mentioned in this Tel el-Hesy tablet and in the tablets from Lachish to the heretic king in the Tel el-Amarna collection. So that here we have virtually two different specimens of Zimrida's correspondence—the letters which found their way to his suzerain hundreds of miles away on the banks of the Nile, and have been preserved over three thousand years among his buried archives, and this one letter addressed to an Egyptian military commander in the locality, which had been thrown into the *débris* of Lachish when it was sacked, and now has been found among the remains of one of the many cities which had been built in succession on the spot, and have lately been dug up out of the mound of Tel el-Hesy. The tablet helped to date the *débris* among which it was discovered, and as the objects found along with it show nothing later than the 18th dynasty, there was left no reasonable doubt that it was the city of Lachish over which Zimrida ruled on behalf of his suzerain, in the

century before the Exodus, which the fortunate explorers had dug up.[1]

> The discovery [as Professor Sayce says] of this document is one of the most remarkable ever made in archæological research. Cuneiform tablets are found in the mounds of an ancient city in Egypt which prove to be letters from the governors of Palestine in the fifteenth century before our era, and among them is a letter of the Governor of Lachish. Hardly have the letters been published and examined before the excavations of a distant mound in Palestine, which the archæological insight of Dr Petrie had identified with the site of Lachish, bring to light a cuneiform tablet of the same age and nature on which the name of the same governor is mentioned more than once. It is a veritable archæological romance.[2]

Of the Palestine letters, however, the most interesting and important are those written from Jerusalem. Until the discovery of the Tel el-Amarna tablets, Jerusalem had been found mentioned in the cuneiform inscriptions only in the records of Sennacherib, many centuries later. From the tablets we learn that Jerusalem, long before the days of David or of Joshua, perhaps as far back as Abraham, their great ancestor, had established itself among the hills of Canaan as a city of strength and importance and a spot of sanctity and renown. Seven of the tablet-letters are from the governor of Jerusalem. In these letters the Khabiri figure prominently, and Ebed-Tob, the governor, complains to his liege lord that they are pressing hard upon him. The tone of Ebed-Tob is the same as that of the other governors

[1] See F. J. Bliss, 'A Mound of Many Cities,' p. 52 ff.
[2] Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 291 ff.

who write to the heretic king. Side by side in some of the cities there existed an Egyptian commissioner and a native prince, the former standing in the same relation to the latter that a Resident occupies to the king of a protected native State in India, whose power would in the circumstances be merely nominal. Ebed-Tob seems to have occupied some such position. The commissioner or resident at Jerusalem has turned a deaf ear to his appeals and representations; and as, moreover, Ebed-Tob has been slandered to the Pharaoh as a rebel against his authority, he seeks directly in this letter the ear of his suzerain by the banks of the Nile.

Ebed-Tob's description of his dignity and position is remarkable. In one letter he says, "I am no prince, I am a deputy of my lord the king, behold I am an officer of the king, I am one who brings tribute to the king. Neither my father nor my mother, but the strong arm of the king, established me over my father's territory." This is asserted in at least three of the Jerusalem letters, and it appears by this translation, which is Winckler's,[1] to mean no more than an acknowledgment of his indebtedness to the Pharaoh for his dignity. Professor Sayce reads it differently. He takes it as implying that, unlike other princes, he obtained his office not by ordinary inheritance but from the oracle of the god, who is referred to under the designation of "The Mighty King." Ebed-Tob of Jerusalem is thus made to be both a priest and a king, reminding us of the *patesis* of the old

[1] The Tel el-Amarna Letters, p. 303 ff.

Babylonian cities, whose office and likeness to that of Melchizedek we have already described.[1] But this idea of "The Mighty King," however attractive and interesting, has not been upheld by fuller examination of the tablets, and cannot be maintained. The letters of Ebed-Tob nevertheless prove that, before the conquest, Jerusalem had a king of its own, as it had in Joshua's days: the very name Uru-Salim in the tablets speaks of "the city of peace," and thus recalls Melchizedek, king of Salem, and priest of the Most High God, in Abraham's day. This very clear and explicit reference to Jerusalem and its king in the tablets makes us loath to hold that Melchizedek, king of Salem and priest of the Most High God, whom we are taught to regard as a type of Christ in His united kingly and priestly offices, is the mere fictitious creation of the sacred chronicler.[2] He represents, as we have seen, a dignity that obtained in the cities of Babylonia back to the days of early Accadian power and splendour.

We are now in a position briefly to sum up the testimony of the Tel el-Amarna correspondence.

(1) The situation presented in the Tel el-Amarna correspondence is in remarkable accord with what we find in Joshua and Judges, and even in Numbers and Deuteronomy. The tablets tell us, as the Scripture history does, of fenced cities with walls and fortifications. Among these cities Jerusalem stands out pre-eminent, bearing already the name given to it in Joshua (Josh. ix. 1; xv. 63; xviii. 28), and

[1] Records of the Past, second series, vol. v. p. 54 ff.

[2] Compare Professor Robertson, 'Poetry and Religion of the Psalms,' p. 193 ff.

having a ruler of its own. The more important towns mentioned in the Scripture history appear in the tablets,—such as Gaza, Gath, Jaffa, Ashkelon, Lachish, Keilah, Gezer, Shiloh, Tyre, Sidon, Kadesh. Out of about 150 names of places in these letters, nearly 100 can be fixed with more or less certainty under Biblical equivalents. We find the Amorites, Canaanites, and Hittites in the tablets as the Amurri, Kinakhkhi, and Khatti. The war-chariots of the tablets, which are the chief implement of war possessed by the kings of the plains, are the same which the Scripture history describes as the terror of the Israelites in the times of Joshua and the Judges. Not only are place-names, which we find again and again in the Bible, mentioned in the tablets, but personal names also. Abimilki, king of Tyre, reminds us of the Scripture Abimelech; Ben-ana of Benoni; Bin-inima of Benjamin; Natan-Addu of Nathanael. We cannot read these authentic documents of the times of the conquest of Canaan without having our sense of the historic truth of the Books of Moses and Joshua and Judges greatly strengthened.

(2) The Tel el-Amarna correspondence shows, as we have already indicated, the prevalence of Babylonian influence and culture from the Euphrates to the Nile, and over all the vast region between. We have seen that mythological texts from Babylonia were used as exercises in the study of the cuneiform character by the scribes in the Foreign Office of Amenophis III. and his son. And this leads to another remark. Not merely is the

vast range covered by this Babylonian tongue remarkable, like the diplomatic French or the ecclesiastical Latin covering Europe at different periods, but the facility with which the extremely difficult cuneiform was written, and the fact that the letters found in the archives of the Pharaoh were written not by professional scribes alone, but by officials and military commanders and others, seem to indicate that there must have been numerous schools and teachers of it. Professor Sayce does not exaggerate when he says :—

> Canaan was the country in which the two streams of Babylonian and Egyptian culture met together, and we now know that Canaan was the centre of that literary activity which the Tel el-Amarna tablets have revealed to us. Canaan in the age of the 18th dynasty was emphatically the land of scribes and letter-writers. If libraries existed anywhere in Western Asia, they would surely have done so in the cities of Canaan. One of those cities, Kirjath-Sepher, or Book-Town, is mentioned in the Old Testament. It was also called Kirjath Sannah, or City of Instruction, doubtless from the school which was attached to its library. The site of it is unfortunately lost. Should it ever be recovered, we may expect to find beneath it literary treasures similar to those which the mounds of Assyria and Babylonia have yielded. Perhaps some day the papyri of Egypt will tell us where to look for it.

(3) The tablets furnish proof that writing was at that time established in Canaan. The Syrian kings who wished to enter into matrimonial alliance with the kings of Egypt send inventories of the presents that accompany their daughters, entering even into minute detail. No wonder, then, if we meet with similar inventories and lists in the Books

of Moses and Joshua. Coming from a country where writing was copiously practised, and settling in a country where it was scarcely less known, were Moses and Joshua utterly ignorant of the art? It is far easier of belief that the Children of Israel brought with them into Canaan their written law as they received it in the wilderness from the hands of their Almighty King himself.

(4) It is interesting in this connection to notice, what Zimmern has pointed out,[1] that the Babylonian employed by these Palestine governors, though written so extensively, is not their mother-tongue. That is clear from the letters themselves. The writers repeatedly employ native Canaanitish glosses to explain Babylonian forms of expression, and these glosses are found to be identical with the Hebrew. The letters thus prove, what had long been matter of surmise, that the language of the Canaanites before the occupation by the Israelites was essentially identical with the Hebrew. One character, one system of writing, was in use, however, for the Babylonian and the native language as well; and it is significant, and opens up a field of inquiry upon which we cannot here enter, that there is as yet no appearance of the so-called Phœnician alphabet in the fifteenth century before Christ.

(5) Further, we obtain from the letters valuable indications of the religion of Canaan and its neighbouring peoples, and of the civilisations prevailing in the countries from which they were written. In the correspondence of Rib-Addi there are fre-

[1] Zeitschrift des Palaestina-Vereins, 1891, p. 133 ff.

quent references to ships. We read even then of Lycian pirates, showing that in these early days Sidon and Beyrout were commercial centres and seaports. There are orders given that the Customs officers shall not interfere with the king's friends. Tyre is spoken of as a place of strength. Abi-Milki of Tyre speaks of five talents of copper as given to "my lord the king." The king of Alashia in Cyprus sends a messenger to the king of Egypt with a hundred talents of copper. There is said to be abundance of gold and silver in the temple of the gods. Dushratta sends to his sister, the queen of Amenophis III., a pair of breast ornaments of gold, a pair of earrings of gold, a *mash-hu* of gold, and a jar of oil. On another occasion he sent a gold goblet set with lazuli, a necklace of twenty lazuli beads and nineteen of gold, and besides other articles of jewellery, ten pairs of horses, ten chariots of wood, and thirty women. When we hear of such ornaments, and consider the facilities for trade and commerce between Canaan and the river-lands on either side, we see how natural it is that among the spoils of Jericho there should have been that wedge of gold fifty shekels' weight, and the hundred shekels of silver, and the goodly Babylonish garment which attracted the covetous eyes of Achan, and through his sin brought trouble upon the whole camp of Israel.

We have seen Babylonian influence paramount in those regions; then that influence giving way before Egyptian influence and the rule of Thothmes III.; and lastly, Egyptian influence in its turn on the wane. Into the weakness thus manifested, recent

discovery enables us to see a new power pressing and asserting itself, and that power we must now consider for a little. This was no other than the wonderful Hittite people, — a people known to us from the Bible by that name, known from Egyptian records as Khita, from the Tel el-Amarna tablets as Khatti, and from later Assyrian annals as Khattukhi, who were found in the second millennium in scattered settlements in Palestine, but whose empire covered the whole of that ancient cradle of humanity, Asia Minor, and brought them into the closest contact with the Greek races in the early Mycenean and Trojan period, when the Greek civilisation was coming to its birth. It is now clear that the famous lions of Mycenæ were borrowed from the Hittites. The pottery of Cyprus and the Trojan plain has upon it a Hittite impress. The two-headed eagle of the Hittites, which had been the emblem of the very early Babylonian kings of Lagash, two thousand years before the period of which we speak, survives, by a descent which can be clearly traced, as the symbol of imperial power in Austria and Russia to-day, for it is to be seen figured on the coins and postage-stamps of the Emperor and the Czar. Surely a wonderful survival of two empires which had disappeared not only from the kingdoms of the earth, but from the records of history, to be recovered and set fairly in their place among the nations by the research of the last quarter of a century!

The Tel el-Amarna tablets give us instructive notices of the Hittite people, who were then apparently approaching the zenith of their power.

We have just seen how largely they bulk in that correspondence, and what a leading place they held in the combination of peoples who joined together in the days of Amenophis IV. to drive out the Egyptian garrisons and to overthrow Egyptian sovereignty and rule. One of the most interesting references to them in this correspondence is when Akizzi of Katna, believed by Winckler to be Emesa or Hamath, writes to Amenophis III., pleading for assistance in the form of troops to protect Nahassi from Aziru and the Hittites. He tells how the king of Khatti had burned and plundered in his land, and how Aziru had captured Katna and made slaves of its inhabitants. The king of Khatti, among his other exploits, had carried off a statue of Shamash, the Sun-god, adorned with the inscription of the king of Egypt. It is clear that at this juncture the king of the Khatti divided the allegiance of those princes and governors with the king of Egypt, and there are distinct indications of the power and influence of this people in those regions at that period.

But these indications give no adequate idea of the widespread extent of this remarkable people. Even yet the story of the Hittite empire cannot be fully told, for the language of the Hittites has, up till now, baffled the ingenuity of scholars. It is only by such mute signs as artistic figures and pictorial representations accompanying inscriptions that this dumb giant of antiquity can tell anything of his past. A considerable number of inscriptions have been found and copied, Hittite seals have been discovered, and there are in existence facsimiles

of a silver boss containing an inscription both in Hittite and Assyrian. As we have already noted, a letter from the king of the Khatti to Amenophis IV. comprised in the Tel el-Amarna correspondence is written in the cuneiform character, though the language has not been made out, but may be presumed to be Hittite. The Hittite chiefs generally were accustomed to employ the cuneiform character for their foreign correspondence, and they had by them for this purpose a host of scribes, interpreters, and official registrars of events, such as we find following the kings of Babylonia and Assyria on their campaigns. When more inscriptions are found there will be more material for scholars to work upon. At least some progress has been made with the decipherment and interpretation of the inscriptions; and whether the hypothesis of Jensen of Marburg that the Hittites are the ancestors of the modern Armenians find acceptance or not, the same genius which triumphed over the difficulties of Egyptian hieroglyphics and Babylonian cuneiform may be expected before long to read to us also the strange characters in which the Hittites have recorded their annals.[1]

It is only within the last quarter of a century that the resurrection of this vanished but widespread and highly developed people has been brought about. One of the first things which led to the restoration of the old Hittite empire to its place in history was the interest aroused by the

[1] In Colonel Conder's 'The Hittites and their Language' (W. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh, 1898) there are sixteen plates containing facsimiles of the Hittite inscriptions yet known, and a helpful Appendix on "The Hittite Texts."

inscribed stones of Hamath in Syria. They had been observed by the traveller Burckhardt in 1812, but from that date to 1870 no notice of them had been published. In that year the American Consul-General at Beyrout, in company with Dr Jessup, lighted upon them, and published a copy of one of them. Squeezes and photographs had been obtained by other explorers, when in 1872 the Turkish Governor of Syria, at the suggestion of Mr W. Kirby Green, British Consul at Damascus, and the Rev. Dr Wm. Wright, then a missionary at Damascus, now editorial secretary to the British and Foreign Bible Society, took possession of the stones, and had them transferred to the Imperial Ottoman Museum at Constantinople, where they are now to be seen. When carefully examined, the inscriptions were found to be different from any that were yet known; and Dr Wright, whose 'Empire of the Hittites' was the earliest authority on the subject, declared they were Hittite. Professor Sayce independently threw out the same conjecture, and when similar inscriptions were found in the ruins of the old Hittite city of Carchemish, it was greatly strengthened. Other monuments discovered in various parts of Asia Minor were found to be covered with similar inscriptions, and the presumption of their Hittite origin was further heightened. On visiting the sculptured figures in the pass of Karabel, not far from Smyrna, in which Herodotus had seen an image of Sesostris—that is, Rameses II.—the great antagonist of the Hittites, Professor Sayce found that the characters were all Hittite forms.

Hittite inscriptions have since been discovered [says Professor Sayce] attached to another archaic monument of Lydia, the sitting figure of the great goddess of Carchemish, carved out of the rocks of Mount Sipylos, which the Greeks fancied was the Niobe of their mythology as far back as the age of Homer; and similar inscriptions also exist at Boghaz Keui, and Eyak in Cappadocia, as well as near Ivris in Lycaonia. Others have been discovered in various parts of Cappadocia, and in the Taurus range of mountains; while a silver boss which bears a precious inscription both in Hittite hieroglyphics and in cuneiform characters, seems to belong to Cilicia. In fact, there is now abundant evidence that the Hittites once held dominion throughout the greater portion of Asia Minor, so that we need no longer feel surprise at their being able to call Trojans and Lydians to their aid in their war against Egypt.[1]

At Aintab and Marash Hittite remains have been discovered, and scattered Hittite sculptures have been found in a great number of other places. Although the inscriptions cannot yet be read, the sculptured figures accompanying them on the Hittite monuments exhibit the same peculiarities of physiognomy and dress as the pictorial representations of Hittites by Egyptian artists, and this removes all doubt as to the identification of these remains with the historic Hittite people.

As to their religion, we gather from Egyptian and Assyrian records that they reverenced a number of secondary divinities who had their abode in the tempest, in the clouds, the sea, the rivers, the springs, the mountains, and the forests. Above these were sovereign divinities, but these divinities, whether sovereign or secondary, were all of a savage

[1] Fresh Light, pp. 90, 91.

character. The name of one god, called Khepa, seems to appear in the names of the Syrian princesses Tadu-khîpa, Gilukhîpa, and Puakhîpa,—Khepa being supposed to be a designation of the Babylonian storm-god Ramman. They had a religion of cruel rites, a compact political organisation, an effective military system, and chariots of a style and make all their own. As we see them on their sculptured stones they were thick-set and short of limb; and the Egyptian artists have painted them without beards, with dark hair, with a yellow complexion, and with turned-up boots. They had not a little in common with the Huns of Northern Europe in their appearance; their hair arranged in three plaited tails, and their yellow skins have suggested a Mongolian origin, but this is one of the points which is still in dispute. Professor Campbell of Montreal, who has made an exhaustive study of this marvellous people, has traced them through the East to Japan, and across the American continent, where they appear as the mound-builders, the Huron-Iroquois, and the Aztecs, while he thinks they crop out also in the Basques of Spain and the Etruscans of Italy. These ramifications are undoubtedly hypothetical; but in their palmy days, when they occupied as an independent people the cities of Kadesh, Hamath, Aleppo, Marash, and Carchemish, they were a powerful race. And we have good ground for believing[1] that from the Nile to the Euphrates, from the hills of Southern Canaan to the mountains of the Taurus range, they fulfilled the part of a great military people, and had

[1] Sayce, The Hittites: The Story of a forgotten Empire.

made considerable attainments in civilisation and the arts.

Till their own inscriptions are made to tell directly the story of the Hittites we have to rely for information upon what we may call, with reference to them, foreign sources. The Hebrew Scriptures, Egyptian records, and Assyrian annals, all have something to add to what we can gather from their own monuments of this people with whom Hebrews, Egyptians, Assyrians, and Greeks were brought into relation.

When we turn to the Hebrew Scriptures to ascertain what they have to tell of the Hittites, the references to their scattered settlements in Canaan and Northern Syria, though giving but a very inadequate idea of the strength of the Hittite people at the zenith of their power, are in perfect accordance with the fuller knowledge of them we now possess, and fit in perfectly into the larger framework of their history as reconstructed by recent research. In Genesis, in the famous ethnographical table (Gen. x. 15), we read that Canaan begat Heth. The Hittites, with the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Jebusites, and other peoples, are given in covenant to Abraham and his seed (Gen. xv. 20). It was from Ephron the Hittite, as we are told in one of the most touching chapters of Holy Writ (Gen. xxiii.), that Abraham purchased Machpelah with its cave to bury his dead out of sight. It is eminently characteristic of what we learn concerning the Hittites of a later day, when the merchants of Carchemish were famous, and the mina or shekel of Carchemish was as well known

in the regions of the Euphrates as the English sovereign or the French napoleon is in Europe now, that we should have detailed to us the business aspect of that purchase, when Abraham "weighed to Ephron the silver, which he had named in the audience of the sons of Heth, four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant." Those Hittites of Hebron were an offshoot of the main body, who likely had their home by the Euphrates, but moved westwards and southwards, and settled along the Syrian Orontes. This branch had taken up their abode among the hills of Southern Canaan, where Kirjath-Sepher, known also as Debir, was one of their cities. Rebekah feared that Jacob would take a wife of the daughters of Heth (Gen. xxvii. 46), and Esau actually took to wife two daughters of the Hittites, Judith and Bashemath, "which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (Gen. xxvi. 35). The Hittites are specially associated with the Amorites as inhabitants of the mountain country of Judah, the Amorites being tall and handsome, the Hittites thick-set and ugly. It would seem as if it were this old relationship which Ezekiel recalls (Ezek. xvi. 3, 45) when he upbraids Jerusalem with her abominations, and says, "The Amorite was thy father, and thy mother was a Hittite." When the spies who searched out the land returned to Moses at Kadesh-Barnea, they reported that "the Hittites, and the Jebusites, and the Amorites, dwell in the mountains"; and when Joshua conquered the land, the Hittites were among the peoples defeated and reduced to subjection. Those not destroyed either

retired or mingled with the conquerors, their fortunes being by this time largely independent of the parent stock in Northern Syria and Asia Minor. That they were not wholly exterminated is clear from the fact that David had among his mighty men Hittite warriors; while Bathsheba, the mother of Solomon, was the wife of Uriah the Hittite. Solomon had business dealings with them (1 Kings x. 29), and took from among them women for his harem. At a later time, when God had sent a panic upon the camp of the Syrians before Samaria, their thought was that "the king of Israel had hired against them the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians" (2 Kings vii. 6). This reference seems to imply that the Hittites were a strong people, having a confederacy of cities, and dwelling outside the border of Canaan. We have a suggestion of the northern Hittites when we read that the man who betrayed the city of Luz to the Ephraimites (Judges i. 26) went "into the land of the Hittites." A reasonable amendment of the Hebrew text of Judges (iii. 3) from Hivites to Hittites as inhabitants of Mount Lebanon gives us another glimpse of Hittite settlements in the north; and another amendment (2 Sam. xxiv. 6) brings the northern Hittites into view; for the meaningless expression Tahtim Hodshi ought almost certainly to read Khittim Hodshi, the perfectly intelligible Hittites of Kadesh, — Kadesh on the Orontes being one of their chief settlements. It is significant that the Hittites named as residing in Mount Lebanon are mentioned after the Sidonians, which is a collective name for the

Phœnicians, and that the Hittites, from whom Solomon took strange wives, are mentioned in the same way. Besides Kadesh three other Hittite cities are now known to be mentioned in Scripture —Carchemish on the Euphrates, smitten by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxv. 20; Jer. xlvi. 2) in the struggle between him and Pharaoh-Necho for the supremacy of Western Asia; Hamath, mentioned repeatedly as one of the northern gateways of Palestine; and Pethor, the city of Balaam, not far from Carchemish.

It is from the Egyptian annals, however, that we learn most surely the greatness of the Hittite people. Long before the Exodus we find Thothmes I. and Thothmes III. in conflict with the Hittites, the Khita of the Egyptian monuments. Egyptian records carry the student often to the Orontes valley, where the powerful race of Khita had their principal settlement. They occupied the regions north-east of Syria, and, later, Syria itself during the 18th and 19th dynasties. In the great battle of Megiddo, Thothmes III. encountered the assembled chiefs of Syria with their forces under the leadership of the prince of Kadesh, called in his annals "the vile enemy Kadeshu"; but it is not till ten years later that we read of the Khita paying tribute to the Pharaoh. That Thothmes reached "the land of Carchemish," and that he captured and plundered Kadesh, we know from his copious annals and from the inscription of his general Amen-em-heb. Amenophis III., as we have seen, entered into matrimonial relations with the king of Mitanni, whom there is reason to believe to have been a Hit-

tite, and in that case the heretic king Khu-en-Aten was the offspring of a Hittite mother. The Hittites are shown to have had constant commercial relations with Egypt, and supplied the Egyptians with cattle, chariots, and the splendid Cappadocian horses, whose breed was celebrated down to the Greek period. Seti I., the founder of the 19th dynasty, met the Khita in a battle, which must have been inconclusive, seeing that hostilities ended in a treaty between him and the Hittite king. The renowned "Poem of Pentaur" recounts the prowess of Rameses II. in battle against the Hittites at Kadesh; and pictorial representations on the temples of Karnak and Abu Simbel show the Hittites driven into the Orontes and drowned. But the campaign of Rameses II. against them left the Hittites in possession of their territory, and before many years Rameses and the Khita king entered into a treaty and alliance. One of the most famous documents of antiquity, which the English reader can peruse in the 'Records of the Past' (vol. iv.), is the treaty which we have mentioned between Rameses II. and the Khita king, with terms of alliance and extradition clauses like any treaty negotiated between civilised nations of to-day. The alliance was ratified by the marriage of Rameses II. to the eldest daughter of the Khita king, who visited his illustrious son-in-law in Egypt soon after, the treaty having been recorded in the two languages, on the temple wall of Karnak, in Egyptian hieroglyphic, and on a silver plate in the Hittite character. This might well have shown the world the greatness of the Hittite people, who,

though only dimly revealed by the fragments of their history recovered up to very recent times, were able to hold their own with the Pharaohs, and treat with them on such equal terms in the days of their greatest power. The peace thus negotiated and ratified lasted into the 20th dynasty, when a confederacy of northern nations, whom the Khita had joined, tried conclusions unsuccessfully with Rameses III., and the Khita king was taken alive. But it was not the Egyptians who gave the finishing stroke to the Hittite people: that was left for the Assyrians some centuries later.

Singularly enough, it is in the cuneiform records of Babylonia that we find the earliest mention of the Hittites. In an astrological tablet of Sargon of Accad we find the words: "On the twentieth day an eclipse occurs. The king of the land Khatti attacks and seizes the throne." Considering that Sargon is now known from contemporary inscriptions to have penetrated into Syria and subjugated, as he puts it, "the four quarters of the world," it will not do to discard this reference off-hand as an interpolation. True, the reference carries us back as far as 3800 B.C., but even at that remote period the Khatti may have begun their career as a people. It is only towards the end of the twelfth century before Christ, in the reign of Tiglath-pileser I. (1120-1100 B.C.), that we learn anything definite about the Hittites from the records of their Eastern neighbours. Tiglath-pileser knows them as formidable enemies. He found them in Commagênê and Cappadocia, and fought with them again and again, though he refrained from attacking them in their

southern capital at Carchemish. For some hundreds of years they held their own against the kings of Assyria, who had taken the place of the old Babylonian rulers, and though their territory was diminished they seem to have retained not a little of their former greatness. When they were of less account as a military power they attained considerable repute in art and in commerce. In 717 B.C. Carchemish fell before Sargon of Assyria, and Hittite power was broken for ever. After the time of Esarhaddon, his grandson, the very name of Khatti vanishes from the records of Assyria and from the history of nations.

There is still a good deal to be learned regarding this interesting and highly developed people, when their inscriptions are made to yield up their secret as the Egyptian and the Assyrian have done. What is needed for this is texts of some length, and especially a bilingual text of sufficient length to afford scope for comparison, as in the Rosetta stone and the Behistun inscription. These may be found in ancient mounds not yet excavated and examined. Only one Hittite mound, thus far, has been examined with any care, that at Sinjirli, which occupies the site of the ancient Hittite city of Shama'l. The inscriptions found there are Aramæan of the eighth century before Christ, and are in raised letters after the style of the Hittite writing. Older representations, we are told,—apparently five hundred years older,—are found with the physiognomy wonderfully resembling the Egyptian figures of Hittites in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Sinjirli has

furnished us with inscriptions in the old Hittite and the later Assyrian and Aramæan, and it may, when more fully explored, yield up further materials to enable scholars like Sayce and Jensen and Conder to attain the sure interpretation of the Hittite characters.

We have mentioned the influence of Hittite art upon Greece. It is not improbable that further research into the history of the Hittites may throw light upon the beginnings of Grecian culture and art; for great as was the originality of Greek art and poetry and political life, we now know that some of its elements were derived from the original and vigorous Hittite people.[1] The Hittites were a mediating influence between Babylonia and Assyria, Egypt, Greece, and Europe. We have seen that they can claim an antiquity far beyond the family of Abraham. We have seen that they had an important influence upon the nascent art and culture of Greece, and that products of Hittite art survive in the national emblems of some of the greatest European Powers. Moreover, when we remember that Hittites were the friends of Abraham and the loyal soldiers of David, and that a Hittite woman was possibly the mother of Solomon, and, if so, the ancestress of our blessed Lord, we must feel a deep interest in their resurrection and restoration to a place in ancient history.

[1] Dr Percy Gardner, New Chapters in Greek History, p. 40.

LECTURE VI.

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN AND THE EARLIER TIMES OF THE HEBREW MONARCHY.

When the Children of Israel crossed the Jordan under Joshua opposite the city of Jericho, and undertook the conquest of Canaan, they had before them a task which was calculated to test to the uttermost their military capacity as well as their solidarity as a nation. There is no warrant whatever either in the circumstances or in the Scripture history for Stade's theory of Israel's invasion of Western Palestine.[1] Upon this theory we are asked to believe that the Israelites abode for a considerable time in the country east of the Jordan till, having increased in numbers and requiring additional territory to accommodate them, they crossed the Jordan peacefully in detachments, clan by clan, and acquired land not by war but by purchase or treaty. It was not opposite Jericho, according to Stade, that the crossing was made, but at the fords of Jabbok; and Joshua was not a real person, but merely the personification of the tribe of Ephraim, which took the lead. Pro-

[1] Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol. i. p. 133 ff.

fessor G. A. Smith has carefully examined this theory and refuted it at every point.[1]

A point upon which Stade lays stress is that the Canaanites were too strong for Israel to have conquered the land by force of arms, as they are represented to have done. But whatever the natural strength of the peoples inhabiting Palestine, we gather from extra-Biblical sources that the time and the circumstances of the Israelitish invasion were distinctly favourable. The Hittites had been exhausted by the wars they had carried on against Egypt, and were already on the decline. Early in the reign of Merenptah, whom we have assumed to be the Pharaoh of the Exodus, Egypt was invaded by strangers from the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean. While Egypt was the goal of their enterprise they first attacked Syria and Palestine, where they still further reduced the Hittite power, and devastated the flourishing communities of the Canaanites, helping to bring about that condition of anarchy in which the Israelites found the Canaanitish tribes. In the reign of Rameses III., when the Israelites were presumably already in the wilderness, there was a repetition on a large scale of this invasion by confederated Mediterranean peoples.[2] We see in these circumstances how the Canaanitish tribes had been weakened to a point at which combined resistance of the invading Israelites could not be successfully attempted.

[1] Historical Geography of the Holy Land, pp. 659-662.

[2] M'Curdy, History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 204. Cf. Sayce, Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 299 ff.

We see also that by the time of the conquest Egyptian suzerainty had ceased, and the garrison of Egyptian troops, which from the time of Thothmes III. had held important positions in the country, had been withdrawn. It was accordingly with the tribes of Canaan, without any foreign allies, that the Israelites had to reckon when they crossed the Jordan and entered upon the conquest of the land. And nothing is more marked, whether in the Biblical or extra-Biblical accounts, than the disunited condition of these peoples. The annals of Thothmes III., two centuries before the Exodus as we reckon, give some hundreds of place-names in Northern Syria and Palestine which that great conqueror had engraved on the walls of the temple of Amen at Karnak. From these place-names [1] we gather that every town and almost every village had its petty king, just as we see in Numbers, Joshua, and Judges. In the Tel el-Amarna tablets we have already noted,[2] apart from Egyptian suzerainty and its symbols, very much the same social conditions. We find a number of petty princes, called in the Scripture story kings, and taking their royal titles from the cities over which they rule, entering into confederacies or waging war with one another. We have found in the newly entered country a multitude of such cities and towns fortified to resist and to hold out as long as possible against the invader. The more important cities mentioned in the Scripture nar-

[1] See "The Lists of the Places in Northern Syria and Palestine conquered by Thothmes III.," by the Rev. H. G. Tomkins, in 'Records of the Past,' second series, vol. v. p. 25 ff.

[2] See above, p. 188 ff.

rative are also mentioned in the tablets — Gaza, Gath, Jaffa, Ashkelon, Lachish, Keilah, Makkedah, Aijalon, Gezer, Shiloh, Tyre, Sidon, Kadesh, Ashtaroth, Jabesh-Gilead.[1] In fact, it is almost a repetition of the tablets when we read in the Book of Joshua (x. 1-5)—

> Now it came to pass, when Adonizedek king of Jerusalem had heard how Joshua had taken Ai, and had utterly destroyed it; as he had done to Jericho and her king, so he had done to Ai and her king; and how the inhabitants of Gibeon had made peace with Israel, and were among them. . . . Wherefore Adonizedek king of Jerusalem sent unto Hoham king of Hebron, and unto Piram king of Jarmuth, and unto Japhia king of Lachish, and unto Debir king of Eglon, saying, Come up unto me, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon. . . . Therefore the five kings of the Amorites, the king of Jerusalem, the king of Hebron, the king of Jarmuth, the king of Lachish, the king of Eglon, gathered themselves together, and went up, they and all their hosts, and encamped before Gibeon, and made war against it.

We know how Joshua went to the aid of the Gibeonites, and in the battle of Bethhoron, on that long day when the sun stood still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Aijalon, discomfited the Amorite allies, becoming master thereby of "all the country of the hills, and of the south, and of the vale, and of the springs." The Biblical narrative of the conquest of the land by the Israelites is strongly supported and confirmed by the revelations of Tel el-Amarna, and the fuller history we now possess of the people of Canaan.

[1] Vogel, Der Fund von Tell-Amarna und die Bibel, pp. 38, 39.

Of the ancient Amorite fortresses Lachish has the most interesting literary history. Situated in what is now the Wady el-Hesy, the first of the valleys of the Shephelah which the road from Egypt strikes, Lachish was now an outpost of Egypt and now a frontier fortress of Syria.[1] In the Tel el-Amarna letters we have seen it in Egyptian hands with a governor, Zimrida. At a later time Lachish was one of the cities which Rehoboam fortified to protect Judah from Egyptian invasion. In the campaign of Sennacherib against Egypt and the west, Lachish was a point of great importance, as we shall see again. At a much later time, during the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, Um Lakhis was a position of great strategical importance.

War and commerce [says Professor G. A. Smith] both swept past her. But this enables us to understand her neighbour Micah's word about her. In his day Judah's *sin* was to lean on Egypt, and to accept Egyptian subsidies of horses and chariots. So Micah mocks Lachish, playing on the assonance of her name to that for a horse: "Yoke the waggon to the steed, O inhabitress of Lachish; beginning of sin is she to the daughter of Zion, for in thee are found the transgressions of Israel" (Micah i. 13).

The ancient Lachish, as we have seen, has been discovered buried in that "mound of many cities" which has been explored by Professor Flinders Petrie and Dr Bliss.[2] By their excavations eight mutually exclusive occupations of the site were

[1] Prof. G. A. Smith, Historical Geography, p. 234.

[2] A Mound of Many Cities, or Tel el-Hesy Excavated. By Frederick Jones Bliss, M.A., 1894.

definitely ascertained, each determined by its own objects and special contents, and by the study of the dateable objects approximate dates have been assigned with strong probability to the different occupations. Professor Flinders Petrie and Dr Bliss agree in thinking that Lachish was occupied between the seventeenth and the fifth centuries before Christ. In the various cities, disentangled from an apparently formless mass of rubbish, were found storehouses, ovens, wine-presses, a public hall, private dwellings, a smelting-furnace, and, most precious of all, that tablet in cuneiform belonging to the time of the Tel el-Amarna correspondence, and now included in it. As only one-third of the Tel was excavated, who can say what treasure-trove of ancient archives may be awaiting the excavator in the remaining two-thirds? It is a remarkable fact that the earliest of the eight successive towns, built the one over the other in the course of centuries — viz., that resting upon the clay of the original plateau — was found to be of great strength, with mighty fortifications and lofty walls, reminding us of the report brought back to Moses by the twelve men sent to spy out the land: "The people be strong that dwell in the land, and the cities are walled and very great" (Num. xiii. 28).

The facts obtained by the excavation of Tel el-Hesy are very remarkable.

The place [says Dr Bliss[1]] was a stronghold of the Canaanites long before the Hebrews had left Egypt. Lying as it did

[1] A Mound of Many Cities, p. 143.

almost directly in the line of march northward, it was in the path of the 18th-dynasty conquerors, and perhaps the destruction of the tower of the earliest City was due to an attack of Thothmes I. One of its cities undoubtedly fell a prey to Joshua; the reader may choose the Third City, if he holds to the old chronology which places the Israelitish Conquest in 1451 B.C.; or, if he follows the later fashion of placing the Exodus under Merenptah, he may ascribe the razing of the large building in the Fourth City to the fierce attack of the Hebrews. We may further assume that either the Fourth or the Fifth City saw the glory of the kingdom of Judah, while Cities Sixth and Eighth were contemporary with the decay of power, the overthrow, the Captivity, and the Return.

It surely gives a profound impression of the reality of the conquest under Joshua when we can, with even this measure of certainty, point to the blackened ruins of a city which he sacked (Josh. x. 31, 32).

While such testimony has come through excavation in the south-west of the land to the historical character of the Book of Joshua, testimony not less valuable is to hand from the Jordan Plain. Gilgal remained for long an undiscovered site, but in the course of the Palestine Survey it was found at the modern Jiljûlieh, marked by a number of small mounds. In the summer of 1894 Dr Bliss spent some time in excavating the Tel es-Sultan, well known to visitors to the Jordan valley from its proximity to the clear and limpid, but almost lukewarm, fountain of Elisha, Ain es-Sultan. The Tel has long been recognised as covering the site of Jericho, and Dr Bliss recovered from it some of the oldest or Amorite

pottery representing a time earlier than the Israelitish invasion.

In the cuttings [he says] I was able to recognise mud-brick walls at various levels, which proved to me that here were superimposed cities as at my own Tell. Near the base, close by the bubbling fountain, a hole has been recently scooped out, for I know not what purpose, revealing a mud-brick wall. When it is remembered that in all probability Tell es-Sultan is on the site of the ancient Jericho, that this wall had a hundred feet of *débris* on top of it, that this *débris* may be proved by analogy to represent perhaps a dozen later occupations, shall I be accused of rashness when I confess to the belief that this may be the wall which fell before the eyes of Joshua, the son of Nun?[1]

We cannot tarry over the early struggles of the Israelites to retain possession of the land, as these are described in the Book of Judges. Religious declension and social disintegration are the most prominent characteristics of the period, although the unity of the nation as the people of Jehovah, and the worship of Jehovah as the God of Israel, were never wholly lost sight of. The period is obscure, and although exploration has cast light upon some passages, there are questions of history and chronology which cannot yet be said to be settled. We hasten onwards to the times of the Hebrew monarchy, when Jerusalem becomes the theatre of events which stand out more clearly in the light of Palestine exploration, and of the recently discovered annals of Assyria.

Jerusalem might well be the scene of thorough

[1] Recent Research in Bible Lands, p. 41. See also 'Quarterly Statement of Palestine Exploration Fund,' July 1894; and Sir J. W. Dawson's 'Egypt and Syria,' pp. 132-136.

and enthusiastic exploration. It is the sacred city of the world. To Christian, Jew, and Mohammedan it is a place of yearly pilgrimage; and it is one of the most venerable cities upon earth. We have noticed the references to it in the Tel el-Amarna tablets, showing that it was a city with a king before the conquest of Canaan, and justifying the belief that it flourished in the days of Abraham and Melchizedek, as we are taught in Scripture history. No city of the world has had such checkered annals. From that first recorded siege, when it was taken by the men of Judah after the death of Joshua (Judges i. 8), to the last, when it was sacked by the wild Charezmians from the Caspian in the days succeeding the Crusades, it stood seven-and-twenty sieges. Melchizedek, Solomon, Nehemiah, Herod, Hadrian, Constantine, Omar, Godfrey, Saladin, Suleiman, are names which, each in turn, represent a new city. Jerusalem is a mountain city. From the Mediterranean the traveller climbs steadily upwards, crossing ridge after ridge like so many lines of circumvallation, until, when he reaches Jerusalem, some thirty-six miles from Jaffa, he has gained a height of 2500 feet. It is these lines of circumjacent hills, formidable barriers to an invading host, that explain the words of the Psalmist: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth, even for ever" (Ps. cxxv. 2). From Jerusalem on the other side the fall is greater than was the rise. The descent to Jericho and the Dead Sea is steeper, for not only is the

distance shorter, but the Dead Sea level is 1300 feet below the Mediterranean, the difference between the level of Jerusalem and the level of the Dead Sea being almost 4000 feet. The main ridge, which forms the backbone of the land, runs somewhat to the west of Jerusalem, and the city occupies the southern termination of a plateau cut off from the main ridge by ravines on the west and south and east. The modern city is seen to most advantage from the spot on the Mount of Olives where we can believe that Jesus saw Jerusalem and wept over it (Luke xix. 41). It is still a striking view. The city is seen lying almost four-square, with a hang towards the beholder, girt with its walls on all its sides, its houses and mosques and towers compactly built together. The Mosque of Omar occupies a site upon the area of the ancient temple, and if the city is visited in Holy Week there are seen within the sacred enclosure crowds of Mohammedan pilgrims keeping the feast of Neby Mousa, the Prophet Moses, which is observed at that season. The valley of the Kidron on the east and the valley of Hinnom on the south and west, with their overhanging cliffs, enable us still to judge of the ancient strength of the city which they surround.[1]

The city itself [says Sir Charles Warren] stands upon four hills, surrounded east, west, and south by deep ravines, those to the west and south running into that to the east called the Kidron valley or Wady en-Nar. These hills lie two to

[1] Underground Jerusalem, p. 51.

the east and two to the west, and are divided by a shallower valley running south from the Damascus Gate: thus, looking south, Jerusalem may be seen divided into two portions —Zion and the Upper City to the west, and Moriah and Bezetha to the east. The former are rather more southerly than the two latter, and the Tyropœon valley, which divides Zion on the north from the Upper City on the south, runs due east till it meets the centre of Moriah, and then turns south into the central valley. Bezetha is cut off from Moriah partly by an artificial ditch or valley, and partly by a natural depression. Jerusalem of the present day differs from the past in a great measure in the configuration of the ground; valleys have been filled up, hills levelled, the city itself has been abandoned in its southern portions, and the portions within the third or northern wall are more built over than formerly.

The labours of the Palestine Exploration Fund from its establishment in 1865 down to 1897 have been largely devoted to Jerusalem, and the excavations of successive bands of workers have put us in possession of a great amount of reliable information regarding the configuration and history of the Holy City. Not a little of the labour thus expended has been directed to the discovery of the ancient walls of the city. As far back as 1874, Mr Henry Maudslay, working in the neighbourhood of the Bishop's School, obtained valuable results. These were followed up to some extent by Captain Warren, and now the recent excavations of Dr F. J. Bliss, also following up Mr Maudslay's, have laid bare the southern wall of the city from the scarp at the south-western corner in the Protestant Cemetery, along the southern brow of Zion as far as the Pool of Siloam.

From the top of the fosse near the Protestant Cemetery [says Dr Bliss [1]] to the rock-bed of the Tyropœon the distance measured along the line of wall is about 2375 feet, or somewhat under half a mile. . . . The wall was found at very different depths. The accumulation above the rock-foundation varied from 6 to 46 feet. Sometimes but one course remained *in situ*, while in one place the wall was found standing to a height of 44 feet. The east wall as far as the north-east angle of the Temple area, and the west wall as far north as the Jaffa Gate, are usually regarded as occupying the course of the ancient city walls. But the walls to the north, of which there were three erected at different periods, are still subject to discussion, especially the second, the determination of which is involved with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Captain Warren was one of the first to engage in excavation at Jerusalem, and his labours have yielded important results, especially with reference to the Temple area. Along its eastern wall lies the great Mohammedan burying-ground, and it was necessary for the exploring party to sink a shaft at a spot clear of the burying-ground to the east, and then at a depth of many feet to carry underground galleries towards the foundations of the wall. In this way the explorer discovered from the character of the masonry that sections of the wall were of high antiquity, and might belong to the days of the Jewish kings. At the south-east angle a massive foundation-stone was discovered resting on the living rock. It measured 3 feet 8 inches in height, and 14 feet in length. Another corner-stone has been found of still greater proportions, the corner-stone of what is called the Great Course at the south-east angle, forming the

[1] Excavations at Jerusalem, 1894-97, p. 131.

seventh course from the ground. It is a gigantic block, 26 feet long, over 6 feet high, and 7 feet wide. It is of hard limestone, and weighs over a hundred tons. Although this is the heaviest stone yet found in these excavations, a longer stone, measuring 38 feet 9 inches, has been discovered on the west wall close to what is called, from the well-known American explorer, Robinson's Arch. On one of the stones in the masonry at the south-east angle were found three letters painted red, while lower down another character in red paint was to be seen. At another spot a mark in red paint was found, and as the paint had run to the other side of the stone, it was clear that the mark had been made before the stone had been laid in its place. These marks, when discovered by Captain Warren's workmen, attracted much attention; and the well-known oriental scholar, Emanuel Deutsch, who examined the marks on the stones as they were found, had no hesitation in pronouncing them partly letters, partly numerals, and partly special marks of Phœnician masons. They were not the first Phœnician inscription with which Mr Deutsch had been called to deal. On the tomb of Ash-munazar, king of Sidon, Phœnician marks of the very same character had been recognised by Mr Deutsch, and the presumption was that these were of still greater age, and might be of the time of Solomon. It is not an unwarrantable supposition that the marks in question reach back to the days of Hiram, king of Tyre, who sent artificers and hewers to Solomon for the building of the Temple. These excavations of Captain Warren are believed

to have laid bare the foundations of Solomon's Temple, as we read: "And the king commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stone-squarers: so they prepared timber and stones to build the house" (1 Kings v. 17, 18).

We know where they obtained the timber. It came from the cedar-forests of Lebanon, which furnished timber for the kings of Egypt and Assyria, and even for the palaces of the mighty cities of Babylonia as far back as the days of Sargon of Accad.[1] But whence did they obtain the stones? This is a matter which has been put beyond doubt by the discovery of the Royal Quarries at Jerusalem in 1852. In that year an entrance was discovered near the Damascus Gate, on the north side of the city, opening like the entrance to the Serapeum, which Mariette discovered in the sands of Sakkhara, by a very low aperture, and leading gradually to vast and spacious subterranean quarries. At first there is presented to the visitor nothing more than the appearance of a natural cave, but ere long the steep descent leads to long corridors which must have been excavated by the hand of man.

By igniting a magnesium light the effect gained is truly wonderful. The ramifications of the subterranean quarries

[1] Layard tells how one cold day his labourers had lit a fire to warm themselves, and though he was at a considerable distance off, he caught the scent of burning cedar-wood which, after the lapse of three thousand years, still retained its fragrance (Nineveh and Babylon, p. 357).

are seen to run in all directions; the rocky pillars left to prop up the roof resemble the massive columns of a Norman cathedral, while nave and rude aisles end in darkness. The stone walls, rocky roof, and rugged archways, prostrate blocks, earthen mounds, sharp precipices, rock-cut steps leading to dark amphitheatres, and, above all, the weird appearance of fantastic shadows cast by the bright light, form a spectacle never to be forgotten.[1]

Chisel-marks and masons' marks are found on the stones which strew the floor. On the rocks we see where lamps were placed to give light to the workers. The quarries are of the same quality of limestone as the corner-stone and the courses of ancient masonry on the Temple wall of which we have already spoken. It was in these quarries that the stones for the Temple were hewn and prepared, each ready to be fitted into its place, so that

> "No hammer fell, no ponderous axes rung,
> Like some tall palm the mystic fabric sprung.
> Majestic silence!"

It is corroborative of this that in the mould close up to the wall, and lying on the living rock, through which Captain Warren and his engineers drove their galleries and shafts, no stone-chips were found, but only broken pottery and fragments of ancient lamps for burning fat. If the stones had been chipped and chiselled as they were laid on the wall, there were bound to be fragments of the stones lying about. But none have been found, and their absence seems to furnish a remarkable confirmation of the truth of the Scripture story.

[1] King, Recent Discoveries on the Temple Hill, pp. 14, 15.

The Temple area itself is by far the most interesting locality in or about Jerusalem, and in many respects the most impressive of all Bible sites. To that spot on Mount Moriah the Father of the Faithful came at the command of God to offer up his son Isaac. On that spot the Temple was built and dedicated with unparalleled festivities by Solomon. Solomon's Temple stood there for more than four hundred years, till it was burned and overthrown by the Chaldean invaders. Rebuilt by Zerubbabel, with the help of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, it was, after the lapse of four troubled centuries, renewed by Herod the Great in a style of wonderful magnificence. It was this latter temple whose glory was greater than the glory of the former, because its courts were trodden by the feet of Him who was the Desire of all nations, who also foretold that in days of coming trial it would be overthrown, so that not one stone should be left upon another in all the majestic pile. "And now, for eighteen centuries it has lain desolate, and will so continue until that day and hour shall arrive of whose coming knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but the Father only."[1]

It was not long till the "house exceeding magnifical," built by Solomon for the worship of Jehovah, suffered at the hands of the spoiler. For "it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam that Shishak, king of Egypt, came up against Jerusalem, and he took away the treasures of the house of the Lord, and the treasures of the king's house; he

[1] Dr W. M. Thomson, The Land and the Book: Southern Palestine and Jerusalem, pp. 501, 502.

even took away all: and he took away the shields of gold which Solomon had made" (2 Chron. xii. 9). Of this campaign we have the record engraven on the southern wall of the Temple of Amen at Karnak. Shishak, or Sheshonq, as he is called in the inscriptions, the founder of the 22nd dynasty, was in all probability of Libyan origin. He was a warlike prince, and had a brilliant career. At the death of Pasebkhanu II. (whose daughter Solomon married), the last of the kings of the 21st dynasty, he found himself, by marriages he had contracted, as well as by natural ability and resource, master of Egypt, with an effective army and a well-filled treasury at his disposal. Shortly after he ascended the throne, Jeroboam fled to the court of Egypt to escape the wrath of Solomon, as Hadad of Edom had done not very long before. At the court of Sheshonq Jeroboam remained till the death of Solomon, when he went back to Canaan, and, on Rehoboam returning an unsatisfactory answer to his demands, headed the revolt of the ten tribes, over whom he was chosen king, with his capital at Shechem. Whether there was not in the 21st dynasty some kind of suzerainty of Egypt over Palestine when Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter and received with her Gezer as a dowry, seems to be somewhat uncertain. It is, however, only natural that Jeroboam's patron in the day of adversity should take sides with him against Rehoboam in the disruption of the kingdoms. At any rate, as we have seen, in the fifth year of Rehoboam, Shishak came up against Jerusalem, with twelve hundred chariots, and sixty thousand

horsemen, and people without number, the Lubims, the Sukkiims, and the Ethiopians, and he took the fenced cities which belonged to Judah, and came to Jerusalem. At the preaching of the prophet Shemaiah, Rehoboam and his people repented, and Jerusalem was saved from destruction, though not from plunder nor from servitude (2 Chron. xii. 2-7). There was, however, no occupation of Palestine by the Egyptian forces, and there is no reason to believe that Sheshonq extended his conquest even into the territories of the ten tribes. On the south wall of the Temple of Amon at Karnak the expedition is recorded, and a list of one hundred and fifty-six districts and places of Palestine granted to his victorious arms by Amon-Ra, and the goddess of Thebes is engraven there. Maspéro has identified sixteen places mentioned in Joshua, and among the names are Rabbath, Taanach, Mahanaim, Gibeon, Bethhoron, Migdol, Aijalon, Shocho, and others both of Israel and Judah. It was quite the custom for a Pharaoh to include in his lists of conquered cities any place that paid tribute, whether it was captured in war or not, and it was good reason enough for Sheshonq to include these Israelitish places in his list that Jeroboam had, as seems more than probable, invited him to come to his aid.[1] Among the names in the list was Jud-ham-melek, which was at first believed to represent the king of Judah, and at the same time passed for a portrait of Rehoboam; but this is one of those almost too interesting and remarkable identifications which have had to be given

[1] Maspéro, Struggle of the Nations, pp. 773, 774.

up. It is simply the name of some place no longer recognisable. It was not long after this invasion of Canaan that Sheshonq died, and Osorkon, his successor, was content, as Maspéro puts it, "to assume at a distance authority over the Kharu. It does not appear, however, that either the Philistines, or Judah, or Israel, or any of the petty tribes which had momentarily gravitated around David and Solomon, were disposed to dispute Osorkon's claim, theoretic rather than real as it was."[1] It is a little difficult to understand, but not altogether incredible, that the account of Zerah the Ethiopian, who invaded Judah in the days of Asa with a host of a thousand thousand and three hundred chariots, is to be referred to this Osorkon, whom Asa in the strength of God was able to overthrow and completely destroy.

Before attempting to show, as we hope to do in next Lecture, what an amount of new light has come to us from the cuneiform records of Assyria to confirm and clear up the history of the relations between Assyria and Israel, we may briefly refer to native monuments left to us from the period of the Hebrew monarchy, and so outstanding that they are worthy of special notice — the Moabite Stone and the Siloam inscription.

The Moabite Stone is the great monument preserved to us from the region east of the Jordan. It was discovered in 1868 by the Rev. F. A. Klein, then labouring in Jerusalem as a missionary of the Church Missionary Society. He found it on

[1] Maspéro, Struggle of the Nations, p. 774.

the site of ancient Dibon, now Dhibān, his attention having been drawn to it by a friendly sheikh. The stone was of black basalt, 3 feet 10 inches high, 2 feet in breadth, and 14½ inches in thickness, rounded both at the top and the bottom, with an inscription on one side consisting of thirty-four lines. In form and appearance it resembles nothing so much as an ordinary gravestone. The language of the inscription differs very little from Hebrew. Nöldeke says it is the oldest monument of syllabic writing, far older than any Greek inscription extant. The letters have in general more similarity to the old Hebrew written characters than to the letters of the Phœnician inscriptions. That in Moab the art of writing was practised and even employed in basalt is not so striking; the remarkable thing is the almost complete identity of the language with Hebrew, and the division of the words. The stone had a very narrow escape from being completely destroyed after it was found. Mr Klein entered into treaty with the natives to secure it, if possible, for the Berlin Museum; but whilst negotiations were proceeding, M. Clermont-Ganneau, of the French Consulate at Jerusalem, offered to purchase it at a large price. Meanwhile the Turkish authorities interfered, and rather than give up the monument to the Pasha and the Mudir, the Bedouins smashed the stone, first making a fire under it, and then pouring cold water upon it, and afterwards dividing the pieces among themselves as amulets and charms. Fortunately, M. Clermont-Ganneau had taken a suc-

cessful squeeze of the inscription while the stone was entire; and about two-thirds of the stone was afterwards recovered, leaving rather more than half the inscription intact. The restored monument is now to be seen in the Louvre, of which the Abbé Vigouroux declares it to be the most precious treasure; and there is a plaster cast in the British Museum. It has become the subject of a large literature, and the translations are very numerous. Its genuineness has been attacked, but unsuccessfully, and it remains to us an authentic monument, a contemporary text, of the days of the Kings nearly nine hundred years before the time of Christ.

It gives an account of the war of Mesha, king of Moab, about 860 B.C., against Omri and Ahab, kings of Israel. We read (2 Kings iii. 4, 5): "And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool. But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel." Ahaziah, the successor of Ahab, was a feeble ruler, and Mesha saw an opportunity of throwing off the yoke of Israel. And not only did he decline to pay tribute, but broke out into open revolt, and, allying himself with the Ammonites and Edomites, attacked the kingdom of Judah. Jehoshaphat, however, got the better of the rebels, more through dissensions among the allies than by the prowess of his army. On the death of Ahaziah, Joram came to the throne of Israel, and resolved to recover the lost possessions of the

crown. In company with Jehoshaphat, and securing through him the alliance of Edom, Joram and his allies attacked Moab from the south, fetching a compass of seven days' journey. They defeated Mesha so thoroughly that the wrath of his god Chemosh could be appeased only by the sacrifice of his son. On account of this wrath of Chemosh the Israelites withdrew and returned to their own land, not having succeeded in imposing the yoke of tribute again upon the Moabite king. Such is the narrative of the Second Book of Kings. Mesha's inscription runs:[1]—

> I, Mesha, son of Chemosh-melech, king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I reigned after my father. I made this monument to Chemosh at Khorkah [which may be the Biblical Kir-haraseth], a monument of salvation, for he saved me from all invaders, and let me see my desire upon all mine enemies. Omri was king of Israel, and he oppressed Moab many days, for Chemosh was angry with his land. His son [Ahab] followed him, and he also said, I shall oppress Moab. In my days Chemosh said, I will see my desire on him and his house. And Israel surely perished for ever. Omri took the land of Medeba, and Israel dwelt in it during his days and half the days of his son, altogether forty years.

The inscription goes on to tell how the Moabites not only recaptured the towns they had lost, but added others to them which they took from Israel, accompanying the capture of the cities with the slaughter of the inhabitants. Mesha captured the priests of the god or goddess Dodo, and Jehovah, and hewed them in pieces before Chemosh. There

[1] Records of the Past, second series, vol. ii. p. 194 ff.

is a general agreement in the Biblical and the Moabite narrative, but there are also discrepancies. These may be partly due to the confessedly imperfect character of the inscription as it has come into our hands. And they may in part be explained by the fact that, like all those ancient kings, Mesha recounts his victories, and is silent as to his defeats. We do not need to go the length of Professor Sayce in imputing to the Biblical writer the same readiness to suppress what is derogatory to the national pride, for the Biblical writers do again and again chronicle defeats sustained by Israel or Judah. This is only what we should expect when we consider the moral purpose running through the divinely guided history of Israel. It is enough to hold that the sacred writer is only giving a fragmentary account of those transactions, and the general agreement of which we have spoken is sufficient to establish the historical character of the narrative in the Books of Kings. The Biblical writer supplements Mesha's narrative, telling of the destruction of his towns which he had to repair, and of the filling up of the wells which he boasts to have reopened. Both for its confirmation of the sacred history in reference to Mesha, who is mentioned nowhere except in this chapter of Second Kings and in the Moabite Stone, and for the example which it furnishes of a Hebrew text—the oldest yet known, for it scarcely differs from Hebrew in vocabulary, grammar, or expression—the Moabite Stone is one of the most precious monuments of Hebrew antiquity. It is likewise remarkable for what it tells us of the religion of

Moab. The religious conceptions of the Moabites are strikingly similar to those of the Israelites.

Mesha [as Professor Sayce points out[1]] ascribes his victories to Chemosh, just as the victories of Israel were ascribed by the Jewish kings and prophets to Yahweh. When Moab was oppressed by the enemy, it was because Chemosh was "angry" with his people, reminding us how "the anger of Yahweh was kindled against Israel, and He delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them." It was Chemosh who "drove" the king of Israel "out before" Mesha, and who said to the Moabite princes, "Go, seize Nebo upon Israel," even as Yahweh declared that He would "drive" the Canaanites "out from before" Israel, and said unto David "Go and smite the Philistines." Chemosh had allowed Mesha to "see" his "desire upon all" his "enemies," the very phrase which is used by Yahweh in the Psalms; and as Samuel set up a "Stone of Help," saying, "Hitherto hath Yahweh helped us," so Mesha erected his monument to Chemosh as "a monument of salvation, for he had saved" him "from all invaders." In fact, as Dr Ginsburg has remarked, "If the name of Jehovah were substituted for that of Chemosh, this inscription would read like a chapter in the Book of Kings."

When we have such a narrative and such conceptions of Deity coming from such an independent source, inscribed on a slab and exhibiting all the naturalness of a conqueror proud of his achievements, and, moreover, presenting not the slightest suspicion of redactors and the like, and when we find it on all-fours with the Biblical narrative, from which it is distinguishable only by national Moabite names,—what justification is there for suspecting the naturalness and genuineness of the records of

[1] Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 374.

the Hebrew monarchy contained in the Books of Kings?

The Siloam inscription is the oldest in pure Hebrew that we possess. It has a story of uncommon interest. The Pool of Siloam, which was within the ancient walls of Jerusalem, to be available for its inhabitants in case of siege, borrowed, as it still borrows, its waters from a spring some hundreds of yards away, and without the city's bounds, called the Virgin's Fountain. The intermittent waters of the Virgin's Fountain, itself capable of being sealed up so as to be of no service to an invading army, have been carried for full twenty-six hundred years to the Pool of Siloam by a tunnel hewn through the living rock, through the projecting spur of Ophel. Dr Robinson had the hardihood to creep, with a companion, through the whole length of the tunnel; and Captain Warren, when excavating at Jerusalem, accomplished the same feat, so that the connection is absolutely certain.

In the year 1880 a boy, playing with his companions at the Pool of Siloam, fell into the water as he was wading up the tunnel, and on rising to the surface caught sight of letters cut out in the rocky wall. The circumstance was reported to Dr Schick, the well-known German architect in Jerusalem, who at once saw that an ancient inscription had been found. In a very short time learned men had gathered to the spot, taking squeezes of the letters, making casts of the whole inscription, and deciphering the writing. The first intelligible copy was made by Professor Sayce, sitting three afternoons in

the water and mud of the tunnel, painfully copying the inscription by the dim light of a candle. The inscription, he tells us, was engraved on the lower part of an artificial tablet cut in the wall of rock, about 19 feet from the place where the subterranean conduit opens out upon the Pool of Siloam, and on the right-hand side as one enters it. The conduit is at first 16 feet high, but the height gradually lessens, until in one place it is not quite 2 feet above the bottom of the channel. The measurement of the tunnel, according to Colonel Conder, is 1708 feet from the Spring of the Virgin to the Pool of Siloam. It does not run, however, in a straight line, and towards the centre there are two *culs de sac*, the origin of which is explained by the inscription. The workmen, we learn, began the conduit simultaneously at both ends, like the engineers of the Mont Cenis Tunnel, intending to meet in the middle. They did not quite succeed, though the two excavations had approached one another sufficiently near for the workmen of the one to hear the sound of the pickaxes used by the workmen in the other. The inscription itself consists of six lines, and is given by Professor Sayce, as follows:[1]—

1. "[Behold] the excavation. Now this is the history of the excavation: while the excavators were still lifting up
2. the pick, each toward his neighbour, and while there were yet three cubits to [excavate, there was heard] the voice of one man
3. calling to his neighbour, for there was an excess in the

[1] Records of the Past, second series, vol. i. p. 168 ff.; Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 379.

rock on the right-hand [and on the left]. And after that on the day

4. of excavating, the excavators had struck pick against pick, one against another,
5. the waters flowed from the spring to the pool for a distance of 1200 cubits. And
6. a hundred cubits was the height of the rock over the head of the excavators."

Such is the famous inscription, discovered literally by the accident of an accident. Of itself it is commonplace enough, and there is no date, no maker's name, no name of any kind. But the form of the lettering leads experts to a pretty definite conclusion. The form and shape and general character of the letters prove to scholars that the Siloam inscription is the most ancient bit of Hebrew—next to the Moabite Stone, if we count it Hebrew—that has come down to us; and the belief is generally entertained that the rock-hewn tunnel which has so long conveyed the waters of the Virgin's Fountain to the Pool of Siloam was constructed by King Hezekiah.[1]

That Hezekiah was a great builder, and that great engineering works were accomplished under his direction, is attested by the words of the son of

[1] It is melancholy to have to record that the Siloam Inscription has suffered the same fate as the Moabite Stone. In July 1890 the portion of the wall of the tunnel containing the inscription was hewn out of its place and broken into several pieces. Suspicion fell upon the fellahin from the village of Siloam, who had the effrontery even to offer a forged inscription in exchange. The broken pieces have, in this case also, been recovered, and are now deposited in the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Constantinople. Fortunately there are several casts of the inscription in existence, and the inscription itself has been deciphered, so that the harm done to the monument, though much to be regretted, is not of serious consequence to archæology.

Sirach five hundred years after his day: "Hezekiah fortified his city and brought in water into the midst of them: he digged the sheer rock with iron, and builded up wells for water" (Ecclus. xlviii. 17, R.V.) And what we may surely call contemporary witness as to Hezekiah's engineering works is also to hand. In 2 Kings xx. 20 we read that Hezekiah "made a pool and a conduit, and brought water into the city." In 2 Chron. xxxii. 4 these works are connected expressly with the fear of the Assyrians, for he takes counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains without the city, "and they did help him. So there was much people gathered together, who stopped all the fountains, and the water course that overflowed through the middle of the land, saying, Why should the kings of Assyria come and find much water?" In 2 Chron. xxxii. 30 we read that he "stopped the upper water course of Gihon," or, as it should perhaps rather be rendered, "stopped the exit of the waters of the Upper Gihon," and directed them "down to the west side of the city of David," or, as the Queen's Printers' Variorum Bible gives it, "by an underground way on the west side of the city of David."

A difficulty arises, however, in connection with Isaiah's well-known prophecy in the days of Ahaz, when the prophet speaks of "the waters of Shiloah which go softly." If the aqueduct carrying the waters of the Virgin's Fountain to the Pool of Siloam was not constructed till the days of Hezekiah, how could Isaiah, prophesying in the

days of Ahaz, Hezekiah's father, speak of "the waters of Shiloah which go softly"? The question has been answered by the explorers around Jerusalem, and answered in a remarkably practical manner. Relying upon the topographical and historical accuracy of the Bible, they came to the conclusion that by sinking shafts at calculated spots they would discover a tunnel more ancient still. And sure enough their labours were rewarded by the discovery of a tunnel of smaller dimensions, but following a straighter course down the valley, which was probably built in the days of Solomon, and which carried the intermittent waters of the Virgin's Spring to the Upper Pool when Isaiah prophesied in the days of Ahaz.[1] This smaller aqueduct, disused for twenty-six hundred years, and now laid bare some twenty feet below the ground, would thus be the original of "Shiloah's waters which go softly," immortalised by Milton as

> "Siloa's brook, which flowed
> Fast by the oracle of God."

But the quotation from Milton recalls another explanation which completely obviates the difficulty. From Jerome's time onward "the waters of Siloa" have been explained by the existence of a little brook having its source in a well in the south of the Tyropœon valley, which thence flowed past Moriah, on which the Temple stood, and what has till lately been believed to be Zion. "If the scholars are right, then Shiloah is on the south

[1] Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement, January 1889, p. 35 ff.; Sir Charles Wilson in Smith's Bible Dictionary, vol. i. p. 1590.

side of Jerusalem, while Gihon is on the west, and the present objection would fall to the ground. Indeed we should have thought that in Isaiah's parallel of the Euphrates and the Shiloah, a brook would be more congruous than a conduit." [1]

Upon the whole, the balance of testimony is decidedly in favour of the view that the existing tunnel represents Hezekiah's underground conduit, led with such skill and accuracy through the solid rock, and that the inscription recently discovered marks the completion of a great engineering enterprise by Hezekiah's workmen.

There are several points of great interest established by this discovery and the connection of Hezekiah with the tunnel.

One fact [says Professor Sayce] is made very clear: whether it were the Siloam tunnel itself, or the second tunnel leading from it to a lower reservoir, that was constructed by Hezekiah, in either case the Pool of Siloam would lie on the west side of the city of David (2 Chron. xxxii. 30). "The city of David" must accordingly have stood on the southern hill, the so-called Ophel; and since the city of David was identical with Zion, according to 2 Sam. v. 7, this hill must represent the original Mount of Zion. Consequently the valley of the sons of Hinnom must be the valley which was known in the time of Josephus as the Tyropœon or "cheesemakers." It once divided both the Temple hill and the southern hill from the mountains on the west, though it is now choked with the rubbish which the numerous destroyers of Jerusalem have thrown into it. In some places the rubbish is more than seventy feet deep, and under it, if anywhere, we must look for the tombs of the kings that were cut in the rocky cliff of the city of David. Here, too, if anywhere, will be

[1] Sinker, Hezekiah and his Age, p. 65.

found the relics of the temple and palace that Nebuchadnezzar destroyed, overlaid with the accumulations of more than two thousand years.

Another fact emerges very clearly from what has been said, that the age of Hezekiah was by no means destitute of the arts of civilisation or of literary culture. We have seen that no small skill in engineering was required for the execution of the tunnel. Moreover, an inscription on stone, of the character of the Siloam inscription, is no product of a newly acquired command of letters. Experts assure us that the letters in the inscription show by their rounded shape that the scribes of Judah had long been accustomed to the art of writing on papyrus or parchment. When we remember how common a thing writing was, albeit in the cuneiform of the Tel el-Amarna tablets, seven centuries before Hezekiah's time, we need not hesitate to believe, with the Siloam inscription before us, that manuscripts, as well as inscribed stones, were plentiful in the Jewish kingdom in his day. And we are not left to mere inference in the matter. In the twenty-fifth chapter of the Book of Proverbs we read, "These also are the Proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out." We have seen already how the kings of Assyria and Babylonia employed large bodies of scribes in copying and writing the older literature of the country, and we shall hear more when we speak of Asshurbanipal's great library in the century following that of Hezekiah. The more advanced critics would have us believe that before the Baby-

lonian captivity the art of writing was rarely, or never, practised in Israel. The literary character of Hezekiah's age and the encouragement given to literature at his court are in direct opposition to such speculations. "The art of writing books," says Professor Sayce,[1] "was no new thing in Israel, and there is no reason why a manuscript of the age of Solomon should not have been preserved to the age of Hezekiah. We have no reason to doubt that 'the men of Hezekiah' did copy out 'the Proverbs of Solomon,' and they were more likely to know whose proverbs they were than the most accomplished critic of to-day."

[1] Higher Criticism and the Monuments, p. 387.

LECTURE VII.

THE CLOSE OF THE HEBREW MONARCHY IN THE LIGHT OF ASSYRIAN ANNALS.

It is when we come to the period of the Hebrew monarchy and to the later years of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah that we receive substantial assistance in treating the Biblical history from Assyrian records. When we speak of the assistance furnished by Assyrian records to the elucidation of the Scripture history, it is only just to remember that they introduce difficulties which create fresh perplexity. These difficulties arise for the most part in connection with the chronology — the two systems, the Hebrew and the Assyrian, agreeing absolutely only on a single date, the date of the capture of Samaria, 722 B.C., and being more or less at variance everywhere else. This sounds of serious omen as we enter upon an important period of the Bible history, and it is not reassuring to learn that the Biblical system of chronology is the less thorough and reliable of the two. That there are discrepancies between the Hebrew and the Assyrian

chronologies, and even in the Hebrew system itself, needs not unduly distress us. What is of real importance is that the historical record of Scripture, apart from these chronological details, is strongly confirmed by the Assyrian annals. Such is the finding of Schrader, whose great work, 'The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament,' is invaluable to the student of this period. "We have had," he says, "to note few inaccuracies, comparatively speaking, and, at all events, the contemporaneous relation of persons and events required by the circumstances involved has been, as a rule, fully demonstrated.'[1]

Assyria had, like Egypt, a long and checkered history before the time when its annals take notice of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Only we must be careful not to confuse Babylonia and Assyria, which in their essential characteristics and in their history are just as diverse as Greece and Rome. Compared with the Babylonian monarchies, which reach back to a very remote antiquity, and cover at least three thousand years, the Assyrian empire as an independent power was modern, and measured less than a thousand years. In its earlier period it was a dependency of Babylon, and it is not till about 1500 B.C. that we see it fairly taking its place as an independent kingdom. The rise of Assyria as a separate state was contemporaneous with the elevation of an alien dynasty, the Kashite, after a long and bitter struggle, to the throne of Babylon. This Kashite or Elamite subjugation of Babylonia in-

[1] Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament, vol. ii. p. 173.

troduced elements of discord between the mother country of Babylonia and the daughter colony of Assyria, with the result that Assyria set up as an independent power, and ere long became the leading power in Western Asia. This supremacy Assyria maintained till 606 B.C., when Nineveh was overthrown by the combined forces of the Medes and Babylonians, and the second Babylonian empire under Nebuchadnezzar, like a meteor, rose and flashed and disappeared.

At the head of the list of Assyrian kings we have Ismidagan, who ruled about 1850 B.C., and was succeeded by his son, Shamsi-Ramman, who built the temple of Asshur in the old capital of Assyria. After Assyria had successfully asserted her independence, we find Asshur-bel-nisheshu ruling about 1480 B.C., and arranging a delimitation of territory with Karaindash the Kashite king of Babylonia. In the Tel el-Amarna tablets we read how Asshuruballit, "king of Asshur, the great king," as he styles himself, sent presents of a royal chariot, two white horses, and other things to Amenophis IV., and begged presents in return, on the plea that his father Asshur-nadin-ahi had received twenty talents of gold from the king of Egypt. He connected himself with Babylon by the marriage of his daughter; and Kurigalzu, who had a long and prosperous reign, was his grandson. Of the great-grandson of Asshuruballit in the Assyrian line, Ramman Nirari I., whose date is 1325 B.C., we have an inscription of considerable length, found by George Smith at Kalah-Shergat, the ancient Asshur, which is the first dated in-

scription known, and exists in two copies.[1] He speaks of Asshuruballit, his great-grandfather, as "the mighty king whose priesthood in the temples was glorious, and whose royal control was established unto distant lands firmly as the mountains." His son and successor, Shalmaneser I., about 1300 B.C., was the real founder of Nineveh. He built what was later the southern suburb of that centre of Assyrian life and power the city of Kalah, now to be found in the ruins of Nimroud, where the Upper Zab joins the Tigris. He was the first Assyrian king who called himself king of the world. Among his successors were monarchs who, like Seti I. and Rameses II. of Egypt, were great builders, notably his son Tiglath-Nindar I., 1289 B.C.; Tiglath-Pileser I., one of the most remarkable of Assyrian rulers, who could boast that he had subdued forty-two countries and their princes, 1120 B.C.; and Asshurnazirpal, 885 B.C., who rebuilt Kalah, which had fallen into ruins, and made it his royal residence.[2]

[1] Hebraica, vol. xii. p. 143 ff.

[2] The evidence of this fact is to be found in the Antiquarian Museum in Queen Street, Edinburgh, where Asshurnazirpal's well-known "standard inscription" is to be seen in the cuneiform lettering cut out on the sculptured slab by his scribes more than twenty-seven centuries ago, and where there is, alongside of the complete inscription, a little fragment, neatly framed, which must have belonged to one of the sixty or more copies of the same inscription which Asshurnazirpal had got made and set up in different parts of his kingdom. The standard inscription and the fragment were both presented to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by the late Sir James Y. Simpson; and a translation of the former by Fox Talbot is to be found in their Proceedings for the year 1866, which also appears revised and corrected in vol. vii. of 'Records of the Past'; more recent and more correct translations still being given by Schrader of Berlin, and Peiser the well-known Assyriologist. The portion of the inscription bearing upon the re-

Although Asshurnazirpal records how he led his army past Lebanon and cleansed his weapons of war in the Great Sea, it is when we come to Shalmaneser II., the son of this vainglorious king and remorseless conqueror, that we find the power of Assyria taking hold of the western lands as far as the coasts of the Mediterranean. He crossed the Euphrates twenty-four times on expeditions to the west, and his empire stretched from the sources of the Tigris to Lebanon and the Great Sea, Babylonia even having become for a time subject to Assyria. It is in an inscription of Shalmaneser II. that we find the only mention of the name Israel, Ahab being spoken of as Ahabbu Sir'lai, Ahab of Israel. The name usually employed for the land of Israel on the Assyrian monuments is *Mât Bît Khumri*, the Land of the House of Omri. Judah, on the other hand, is repeatedly mentioned in the

building of Kalah, including the fragment of three lines, already mentioned, runs as follows: "The city of Kalah, the ancient, which Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, the mighty, my ancestor, had founded; this city was waste and in ruins, this city I built anew. People which I had led into captivity, belonging to lands which I had subjugated, from Bit-Adini and Khatti-land, them I settled there. The old mound I altered and brought it down to the level of the water, 120 tikpi of surface I levelled. . . . A palace of cedar-wood I raised for my royal residence." The inscription is of interest because it shows that in the reign of Asshurnazirpal the practice was already in use by the Assyrian kings of deporting conquered peoples, and settling them in other portions of the empire, of which we have one instance in 2 Kings xvii., where we are told the king of Assyria, no doubt Sargon, brought men from Babylon and from Hamath and elsewhere, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel, out of whom grew the hybrid race who feared Jehovah and served their own gods; and another in Ezra iv. 10, where Asnapper, Asshurbanipal, did the like. Another point of correspondence with the Bible narrative is found in Bit-Adini, which is the same as "the children of Eden" in Sennacherib's blasphemous letter (2 Kings xix. 12).

inscriptions of Sargon and his immediate descendants, Sennacherib and Esarhaddon. Samaria, the capital of the Northern kingdom, is frequently mentioned in the inscriptions of the Assyrian kings.

Shalmaneser II. during his long reign (860-825 B.C.) was contemporary with Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, and Joash, kings of Judah; with Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, and Jehu, kings of Israel; with Hazael and Benhadad II., kings of Damascus; and Mesha, king of Moab. The Assyrian authorities for his reign are an inscription engraved by himself on the rocks of Armenia; the Black Obelisk brought by Layard from Nimroud, now in the British Museum; and the texts engraven on the bronze gates of Balawat, discovered by Rassam in 1878, and recognised as the swinging gates of Shalmaneser's palace. From these sources we learn that in the sixth year of his energetic reign he encountered the combined forces of Damascus, Hamath, Israel, and other States which had united to oppose his progress westwards, and completely routed them at Karkar. It is singular that Ahab of Israel and Hadadezer of Damascus, better known to the Bible student as Benhadad (Benhadad II.), should be found making common cause and fighting on the same side. Still, the alliance formed in the face of the common danger which threatened Syria and Israel, and indeed the whole of the Western States, is completely in accord with the Scripture narrative, which tells of a covenant denounced by God's prophet between Ahab and Benhadad (1 Kings xx. 34), and mentions a period of three years when there was no war between Syria and Israel

(1 Kings xxii. 1). It was Benhadad that bore the brunt of the Assyrian assault at the battle of Karkar (854 B.C.), and the disaster to the allies seems to have broken up the confederacy; for soon after Ahab is found with the aid of Jehoshaphat of Judah attempting, unsuccessfully and with fatal results to himself, to recover from the weakened Damascus the city of Ramoth-Gilead.

Another campaign of Shalmaneser, as we learn from the inscription on the Black Obelisk, was directed against Hazael of Damascus, who had murdered Benhadad and usurped the throne of Syria (2 Kings viii. 15). The Assyrian was victorious in the field, but the city of Damascus was too powerful for him, and he passed on, ravaging the Hauran, and burning the unwalled towns, to the number of two hundred and fifty, beyond the Jordan. Crossing the Jordan westwards, he marched to the sea-coast, and near Beyrout received the tribute of Tyre and Sidon, and also of Yahua, son of Khumri. Yahua, despite a description which refers not to parentage but dynasty, is no other than Jehu, king of Israel. Among the reliefs on the upper portion of the Black Obelisk is one in which the ambassadors of Jehu are represented, and the Jewish cast of features is unmistakable. Of this campaign of Shalmaneser, and of Jehu's submission, there is no record in the Bible narrative.

The next Assyrian monarch to turn his arms against Syria was Ramman Nirari III., the grandson of Shalmaneser II. He reigned from 810 to 781 B.C. He succeeded where his grandfather failed, having taken Damascus and reduced it to subjec-

tion. "West of the Euphrates," runs one of his inscriptions, "I subdued the land Khatti, the whole of the land Akharri (Phœnicia), Tyre, Sidon, Bît Khumri, Edom, and Philistia, unto the shore of the Sea of the Setting Sun, and imposed on them tributes and contributions." Although Ramman Nirari is not mentioned by name in the Scripture narrative, his presence and activity in Syria had their influence upon contemporary events recorded in the Second Book of Kings. We read (2 Kings xiii. 4, 5) that Jehoahaz the son of Jehu "besought the Lord, and the Lord hearkened unto him; for he saw the oppression of Israel, because the king of Syria oppressed them. And the Lord gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians." On this Professor M'Curdy remarks: "The relief was due to the crippling of the resources of Damascus by the aggressive warfare waged by the forces of Asshur during the closing years of the ninth century, and the 'deliverer' (2 Kings xiii. 5, cf. verse 23) was none other than the redoubtable Ramman Nirari himself." [1]

With the death of Ramman Nirari III. in 781 B.C. the glory of Asshur suffered a temporary eclipse. Syria was also on the decline. On the other hand, the kingdom of Israel under Joash and Jeroboam II., and the kingdom of Judah under Uzziah, reached the zenith of political prosperity. In 745 B.C., however, a usurper, Pul or Pūlū, ascended the throne, and taking the name of one of the most illustrious of the early Assyrian kings, revived the glory of Assyria, reigning as Tiglath-

[1] History, Prophecy, and the Monuments, vol. i. p. 300.

Pileser III. He reigned from 745 B.C. to 727 B.C. Both in the Bible history and in the inscriptions he appears as a powerful warrior, who subjugated the whole of Western Asia from the Median frontier mountains in the east to the Mediterranean in the west, including even a part of distant Cappadocia. The mention of two kings of Assyria in the fifteenth chapter of Second Kings, Pul and Tiglath-Pileser, was at first a source of perplexity to Assyriologists. No such name as Pul has been found on the monuments. The puzzle was rather increased than diminished by the tradition of Berosus regarding a Pul who was king of the Chaldæans about this time. When it became clear from the inscriptions that Tiglath-Pileser exercised sovereignty over Babylon as well as Assyria, and when it was remembered that double names are common both in ancient and modern history, the solution of the difficulty by the identification of Pul and Tiglath-Pileser seemed highly probable, and it is now regarded as certain.[1] Tiglath-Pileser was one of the greatest monarchs of antiquity. He was, in fact, the first who attempted to consolidate an empire in the manner to which we have become accustomed since Roman times. He did not remain content to receive tribute from the kings and rulers of the states whom he conquered. The countries which he captured became subject-provinces of his empire, governed by Assyrian satraps, and each province had to pay its annual contribution to the imperial treasury. From the fact that no

[1] Schrader, Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament, vol. i. pp. 230, 231.

fewer than five Hebrew kings are mentioned in his Annals, the greatest interest attaches to the fragments of his history which have come down to us. These kings are Azariah or Uzziah, and Jehoahaz—that is, Ahaz of Judah; and Menahem, Pekah, and Hoshea of Israel. Along with them are mentioned their contemporaries, Rezin of Damascus, and Hiram of Tyre, and two queens of Arabia, unknown to history, Zabibi and Samsi. The name of that ancient patriot and warrior, Merodach-Baladan, the Hereward of his age, as he has been called, figures in his inscriptions; and the title of Rabshakeh, which appears in Isa. xxxvi. and xxxvii., is also found.

Not long after his accession, Tiglath-Pileser, like his predecessors, turned his attention to the west. After the siege of Arpad, about fifteen miles northeast of Aleppo, the Assyrian forces made their way into Syria, and putting into operation the Assyrian practice of deportation and repopulation, the conqueror annexed Hamath, which had sought the alliance and assistance of Azariah,—that is, Uzziah, —king of Judah. The Annals of Tiglath-Pileser under the year 738 B.C. record the results of this campaign as follows: "Nineteen districts belonging to Hamath, with their circumjacent towns lying along the shore of the Western Sea, which in sinfulness and vileness had allied themselves to Azariah, I restored to the territory of the land of Asshur; my governors and administrators I set over them." There is some obscurity as to the effect of this campaign upon Azariah and the kingdom of Judah. It has been ingeniously con-

tended by Winckler, who is followed by Hommel and Strack, that it is not Azariah of Judah, but an Azariah, the king of a region, Yaudu, in Northern Syria, who is mentioned. But no Azariah is found in the Sinjirli inscriptions, and although Yaudu is found, it was too insignificant a State for nineteen districts of Hamath to look to for protection and leadership against the invading Assyrian. Nor are historians agreed as to the immediate effect of Tiglath-Pileser's victory over the Hamathites. Whether Tiglath-Pileser then refrained from molesting Judah, or whether her prestige was broken by this campaign of the Assyrian king, the time was near when Judah was to be put under the heel of the Assyrian oppressor. Tiglath-Pileser had again crossed the Euphrates and invaded Syria, with the result recorded in his inscriptions, that Rezin of Damascus, Minihimmi of Samarina—that is, Menahem of Samaria—Hiram, king of Tyre, and other kings (though not the king of Judah) presented tribute. What is stated in a word or two in the Annals of Tiglath-Pileser is recorded at greater length in the Bible history (2 Kings xv. 19): "And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria: so the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land." After the death of Menahem and the murder of Pekahiah, his son,

Pekah, who had usurped the throne, in alliance with Rezin, king of Damascus, attacked Judah, and besieged Jerusalem with the object of overthrowing the house of David, and setting a Syrian, Ben-Tabeel, on the throne of Judah. Ahaz had just ascended the throne, and conscious of weakness, and even of disaffection, within Jerusalem itself, he appealed to Tiglath-Pileser for help. It was a miserable transaction for the grandson of the great and powerful Uzziah to be engaged in, and it bears a sacrilegious character when we read that "Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the Lord, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria" (2 Kings xvi. 7). He deliberately sacrificed the independence of his country in the terms of his offer of submission: "I am thy servant and thy son." It is a significant comment that is made by the Chronicler (2 Chron. xxviii. 21) upon the treatment of the abject king of Judah by the proud Assyrian: "He helped him not."

It was at this juncture, when Isaiah was endeavouring to put spirit into Ahaz to refuse submission to Assyria, and bidding him have no fear of "these two tails of smoking firebrands," Rezin of Syria and Pekah, the son of Remaliah, that the prophet gave the famous sign: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. vii. 14). To escape a momentary trouble which the anointed of the Lord had no right to fear, Ahaz entered upon the path of national humiliation and apostasy. When Ahaz sent his disgraceful message to Tiglath-Pileser, that ener-

getic ruler was already on his way on a new expedition to the west. From his inscription, entitled "The war in Palestine," [1] we can gather the course of the campaign. He scattered the forces of Rezin, and devastated his territory with fire and sword. We read of him at Gilead, at Abel-beth-Maacah, both in his own Annals and in the narrative of Second Kings (2 Kings xv. 29), and even as far as Gaza, which was captured and laid under tribute, the inhabitants of Gilead and Galilee and the north being carried away captive to Assyria. On his return he captured Samaria, without, however, razing it to the ground; and Pekah having been slain by his own people, Tiglath-Pileser left Hoshea, the leader of the conspiracy, on the throne as the vassal of Assyria. Ten talents of gold and a thousand of silver, we learn from the cuneiform inscriptions, was the tribute exacted. Among those who are named as having paid tribute is Jehoahaz—that is, Ahaz—of Judah, along with the kings of Ashkelon, Moab, and Edom. At Damascus, which fell to Tiglath-Pileser after a two years' siege, and was cruelly punished for its prolonged resistance, Ahaz appeared before the conquerer at a great assemblage of tributary kings gathered to do him homage, and professed such admiration of the altars at which the Assyrian monarch sacrificed, that he sent to the high priest at Jerusalem "the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof," desiring him to set it up in the house of the Lord against his return from Damascus

[1] Records of the Past, vol. v. pp. 51, 52.

(2 Kings xvi. 10-18). The Assyrian monarch having made provision for the administration of the conquered provinces, returned no more to the west, but occupied himself with the subjugation of hostile chieftains nearer home. Although not without chronological difficulties, the inscriptions of Tiglath-Pileser III., mutilated though they have been by the pride and jealousy of Esarhaddon some generations later, throw welcome light upon the narrative of Second Kings (chaps. xv., xvi.), and upon the prophecies of Isaiah (chaps. vii., viii.), prompted by the events of the time.

In 727 B.C. Tiglath-Pileser died, and was succeeded by Shalmaneser IV. His reign was short; and, as no annals of his have come to light, we have to content ourselves with the tolerably full accounts of Second Kings. In the seventeenth and eighteenth chapters we learn that Hoshea of Israel, relying upon help from the king of Egypt, thought the death of Tiglath-Pileser a good opportunity for striking a blow for independence. It was a fatal throw of the dice. No help came from Egypt. With the unaided and enfeebled resources of his kingdom Hoshea had to face the chastising forces of his Assyrian suzerain, the result being that he was taken prisoner outside of Samaria and most likely carried away to Nineveh. Meanwhile, as the siege of Samaria was proceeding, Shalmaneser IV. seems to have retired to Nineveh and died.

Sargon, no blood-relation of the deceased monarch, —some think nominated by him to the succession, others think by a successful stroke of usurpation,—

immediately ascended the throne. From his numerous inscriptions—which it is worth remembering were the first-fruits of Assyrian excavation, and brought to light a name which had been buried in utter oblivion for more than two thousand years—we learn that he was the king of Assyria who captured Samaria in 722 B.C. and deported the Israelites.

In the beginning [of my reign] [he says in his annals] the city Samaria [I took] with the help of Shamash, who secures victory to me. [. . . 27,290 people inhabiters of it] I took away captive; 50 chariots, the property of my royalty, which were in it I appropriated. [. . . The city] I restored, and more than before I caused it to be inhabited; people of the lands conquered by my hand in it [I caused to dwell. My governor over them I appointed, and tribute] and imposts just as upon the Assyrians I laid upon them.

This furnishes striking confirmation of the narrative of Second Kings, in which we are told that "the King of Assyria brought men from Babylon, Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, and Sepharvaim" (2 Kings xvii. 24), "and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel"; and it is well known that it was the hybrid stock produced by their intermarriage with the Israelites that were left who are known to us in the Gospel history as the Samaritans. Israel now became an Assyrian province, Samaria being the seat of the governor.

Sargon, the conqueror of Samaria, whose Annals are engraved on the halls of Khorsabad, during his reign of sixteen years—from 722-705 B.C.—raised the empire of Assyria to the zenith of its power. We have seen how disastrous to himself

and to his people were the overtures of Hoshea of Israel to the king of Egypt. The neighbouring kings were not deterred by that example. They thought the accession of a new king a good occasion for combining with Egypt and throwing off the yoke of Assyria. The kings of Syria, Palestine, and Arabia joined in this revolt, with the king of Lower Egypt behind them. The result was calamitous. The king of Syria was easily beaten, and the king of Hamath was flayed alive. The turn of the Arabians came a few years later. The Assyrian monarch marched to the border of Egypt and gave battle to the Egyptian king, with the kings of Raphia and Gaza, and completely routed them at Raphia — a city on the coast to the south of Gaza. This was in 720 B.C., and it does not appear that Sargon interfered in the affairs of the kingdom of Judah; for though he speaks of himself as the conqueror of the remote land of Judah, that may mean nothing more than that Ahaz, who, according to the most likely calculations, was still on the throne, continued the tribute he had agreed to pay to his predecessor. In 715 B.C. Sargon undertook a campaign into North Arabia, with the result that Queen Samsi of Aribi and Ithamar of Sheba, together with Pir'a of Musur, — sometimes read as Pharaoh of Egypt,—brought him rich presents, among which were sweet-smelling spices of the mountains, gold, precious stones, horses, and camels. Of these tribes Sargon settled some in Samaria in the accustomed Assyrian fashion; and it is of their descendants that we have "Geshem the Arabian" and others

mentioned in Nehemiah (ii. 19, iv. 7) in the days after the return from the exile.

It was in 711 B.C. that the expedition of Sargon to punish the king of Ashdod, who had refused to pay his tribute, took place,—the expedition which Isaiah notices in a parenthesis, thus preserving the one Bible allusion to this great monarch—the one reference to him, in fact, known to history before the disinterment of Nineveh from its ruins. Isaiah refers to "the year that the Tartan" (the generalissimo of the Assyrian forces) "came unto Ashdod (when Sargon the king of Assyria sent him), and warred against Ashdod, and took it" (Isa. xx. 1). This expedition is fully described in Sargon's inscriptions; in fact, besides the mention of it in his Annals and in the synoptic inscription giving an account of his reign, the Ashdod expedition has an inscription to itself. We do not require to hold that there is any discrepancy between the statement of the prophet that the Tartan fought against Ashdod and took it, and the statement of Sargon claiming that he took Ashdod himself. There is no usage better established by the monuments than that by which the military achievements of their generals are claimed by the kings of Assyria as their own. It has been a question how far Sargon interfered with Jerusalem in this campaign. It has been held by Professor Sayce and Professor Cheyne that, while the Tartan invested Ashdod, Sargon himself overran the widespreading land of Judah and seized its capital, Jerusalem. And it has been assumed on this view that Isa. x. and xi., where the march of an

invading army from the north is graphically described, refers to that event. This view has not found favour. Professor G. A. Smith[1] assigns the prophecy of Isa. x. to Sargon's later campaign of 720, and holds that, having come to the very heights around Jerusalem, he turned away by the coast-land of Philistia to meet the Egyptian army at Raphia. The absence of any direct mention, either in the Bible narrative or in the copious inscriptions of Sargon, of an event so notable as the capture of Jerusalem by his arms, is fatal to the supposition of such an event. In 705 B.C. Sargon perished by the hand of an assassin—the suspicion not being awanting that in this atrocity Sennacherib, his son and successor, had a share. Sargon was not merely a great conqueror but a great statesman, who employed the peace for which he fought so strenuously in building up the institutions of his empire. In his palace at Dur-Sargina, now historic under its name of Khorsabad, which he made his royal residence, and which contains such evidences of his greatness, he has recorded the annals of his brilliant and epoch-making reign.

In 705 B.C. Sennacherib succeeded his father Sargon, and began that career as a builder and patron of letters, as well as remorseless conqueror, which has carried his name down to modern times. In 701 B.C. we find him, like all his famous predecessors, on his way to the shores of the Mediterranean. The revolt of Judah from the Assyrian allegiance was the occasion of the expedition. The

[1] Isaiah, vol. i. p. 169 ff.

revolt itself was due to intrigues on the part of Egypt on the one hand, and of Merodach-Baladan of Babylon on the other. Merodach-Baladan thought he saw in the accession of a new king an opportunity of throwing off the yoke which Sargon had riveted upon him, and having heard of Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, he sent letters and a present by way of congratulating him, but in reality to sound him on the subject of a simultaneous attempt to recover their lost independence. How Hezekiah received his messengers, and what were to be the ultimate results of his vainglorious display of the national treasures to the ambassadors of the king of Babylon, are well known to the reader of Holy Writ. Egypt was keenly on the watch for an opportunity of striking a blow at her great Eastern rival, and Tirhaka's accession to power gave him admission to this widespread anti-Assyrian confederacy.

Having in the interval disposed of Merodach-Baladan,—of whom his inscriptions tell, "In the beginning of my kingdom, of Merodach-Baladan, king of Kardunias, with the army of Elam, in the vicinity of Kisu, I accomplished the overthrow,"—Sennacherib was free to proceed to the chastisement of his rebellious vassal Hezekiah, and to the overthrow of his Egyptian rival Tirhaka. Misgivings as to the result of that western campaign could not have entered the minds of Sennacherib and his captains. Yet as we think of his departure from Nineveh with a many-peopled host, numbering, as Assyrian armies did when they set out on great campaigns, perhaps two

hundred thousand men, and as we contemplate his disastrous return, we are forcibly reminded of the Grand Army with which Napoleon invaded Russia, or of the Spanish Armada which sailed forth from Spain with such pomp and pride for what seemed the easy task of invading Protestant England and making it a province of Catholic Spain. Sennacherib's inscriptions tell us how it fared with the expedition when once it came into touch with the western allies. He replaced the rebellious king of Ashkelon by a vassal of his own; he encountered the king of Egypt, Tirhaka, the Assyrian Tarku, and overthrew him at Eltekeh; he set free the king of Ekron from the hands of Hezekiah of Judah, and restored him to his throne; and he attacked Jerusalem, where Hezekiah, against the counsels of Isaiah, had been drifting into an Egyptian alliance. "Hezekiah himself," he says, "I shut up like a bird in a cage in Jerusalem, his royal city. I built a line of forts against him, and I kept back his heel from going forth out of the great gate of his city. . . . The fear of the greatness of my majesty overwhelmed them, even Hezekiah." One point even the boasting of the Assyrian monarch cannot conceal, and that is his failure to capture Jerusalem, for from the beginning of this inscription to the end there is not a syllable to show that it was taken by his arms.[1]

The precise course of Sennacherib's invasion of Palestine, and especially of Judah, is, despite the

[1] Schrader, Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament, vol. i. p. 297; George Smith, Assyrian Discoveries, p. 303 ff.

amount of materials to hand, not very easily followed. It seems highly probable that, after having settled with Phœnicia, and having arranged for the prosecution of the siege of Tyre, which resisted Sennacherib, as at a later time it held out against Alexander the Great, he broke up his army into two main divisions, one marching along the coast route to capture the cities of the Philistines and to be within striking distance of Egypt, the other traversing Galilee and Samaria to crush Judah.[1] The Scripture narrative runs that "Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the cities of Judah and took them." This Sennacherib, in the inscription upon the winged bull at the gate of his palace, describes more particularly as "forty-six of [Hezekiah's] cities, fortresses, strong and small cities." "Two hundred thousand one hundred and fifty people,"—so runs the parallel inscription on the Taylor cylinder, — "small and great, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep, . . . I brought out and as spoil I counted"; which would mean the complete devastation of the territory north of Jerusalem and around it. If the famous description of an invader's march in Isaiah belongs to the expedition of Sennacherib, we can trace the movements of the remorseless foe to the very gates of the Holy City. Seeing resistance to be hopeless, Hezekiah offered submission to Sennacherib, who was encamped before Lachish, saying, "Whatsoever thou wilt impose upon me, I will bear." He imposed a fine, says the narrative of the Book of Kings,

[1] Sinker, Hezekiah and his Age, p. 107.

of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold; eight hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold, say the Assyrian annals, where there is an apparent discrepancy, due, we might say, to Assyrian exaggeration, but no discrepancy at all if it be the case, as has been suggested, that the Hebrew silver talent stood to the Babylonian in the ratio of three to eight. Meanwhile Sennacherib was in the country of the Philistines crushing the revolted cities, which he was able to do before Tirhaka of Egypt came on the ground.

Naturally we are concerned as to Lachish, around which so much of interest, even of romance, had already gathered. Singularly enough, while all three Scripture accounts — in Second Kings, in Second Chronicles, and in Isaiah — make mention of the siege of Lachish by Sennacherib, it is not so much as mentioned in his Annals. To make up for the omission, however, we have a splendid sculpture, now in the British Museum, occupying several slabs, from one of the halls of Sennacherib's palace, representing the captives of Lachish passing before the Assyrian monarch seated on a throne, and over the sculpture the inscription: "Sennacherib, king of nations, king of Assyria, seated on an exalted throne, receives the spoils of the city of Lachish."[1]

Whether it was that Sennacherib repented of his leniency towards Jerusalem, thus leaving a

[1] It is interesting to note that among facsimiles of Assyrian historical slabs in the British Museum recently added to the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art, carefully reproduced in oriental alabaster, the facsimile of the slab bearing this inscription is to be found.

strong fortress in his rear in the hands of a doubtful vassal, or whether he discovered Hezekiah, notwithstanding the punishment inflicted upon him, in some disloyal intrigue, "the king of Assyria," so runs the narrative in Second Kings, "sent the Tartan," the commander-in-chief; "Rabsaris," the chief courtier; and "Rabshakeh," the chief of the staff, "from Lachish to king Hezekiah with a great host against Jerusalem." With a host sufficient to crush Jerusalem, these three plenipotentiaries summoned Hezekiah to an audience, and, when his three chief Ministers of State went forth to them and begged them not to speak in the Hebrew but in the Syrian tongue, made light of the authority of the king, and by blasphemous persuasions uttered in Hebrew sought to create division among the listening people, and to obtain their submission. "But the people held their peace, and answered" the blaspheming Rabshakeh "not a word." Jerusalem was within a hair's-breadth of the horrors of an Assyrian capture, and Hezekiah might well tremble as he thought of the king of Hamath flayed alive, or the king of Bet Silun impaled before the gate of his capital. So he turned to Jehovah, and Isaiah the prophet was commissioned to speak to him the divine answer: "Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reproached me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land. So Rabshakeh returned, and found

the king of Assyria warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish" (2 Kings xix. 6-8).

But now the Assyrian forces were to encounter Tirhaka, the king of Ethiopia, and Sennacherib was concerned that Jerusalem had not surrendered. Perhaps but for Tirhaka's forward movement at this juncture, Sennacherib might have led his main army against Jerusalem. In that case its fall would have been inevitable. But as he has Tirhaka to face, he is content to send a letter demanding from Hezekiah the surrender of Jerusalem, bidding him give up all hope of deliverance from his God. Again, Hezekiah had recourse to Jehovah, and to his prayer an answer was granted by the prophet Isaiah, partly addressed to Hezekiah and partly addressed to Sennacherib, but closing with the divine assurance concerning the king of Assyria: "He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake." And then came the great disaster which brought relief to Judah and to the west all the days of Sennacherib. The Assyrian had met Tirhaka in a decisive battle and completely routed his forces. It was when following up this victory as far as Pelusium that the catastrophe befell of which we have the record both in the Second Book of Kings and in the pages of Herodotus. The old Greek historian heard from

the priests of Memphis how the Egyptian and Assyrian armies were encamped at Pelusium, and there came "in the night a multitude of field-mice, which devoured all the quivers and bowstrings of the enemy, and ate the thongs by which they grasped their shields. Next morning they commenced their flight, and great multitudes fell, as they had no arms with which to defend themselves."[1] The Bible account reads: "And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the Lord went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand; and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh" (2 Kings xix. 35, 36). When we remember that the mouse is the Egyptian symbol for pestilence, we can understand that the Hebrew and the Egyptian narratives are just different ways of describing the extraordinary blow that fell upon Sennacherib's host. And when we consider that the Assyrian inscriptions are silent as to the results of this Egyptian campaign and Sennacherib's return to his own land, we have in that silence the strongest confirmation of the catastrophe that overtook his almost irresistible array.

After his invasion of the west, Sennacherib lived twenty years; but there is no record of any visit to the western lands again. He waged war with Elam and Babylon, and overcame them in a battle which is recorded on what is called the Taylor cylinder, one of the finest battle-pieces, we are

[1] Herodotus, ii. 141.

told, in any literature. The capture and destruction of Babylon by Sennacherib in 689 B.C., like the capture and destruction of Constantinople by the Turks at a much later time, is one of the calamities of human history; for who can tell what ancient records, what monuments of remote antiquity, were destroyed in its overthrow? Cruel and remorseless as he was in war, Sennacherib nevertheless did much to strengthen and beautify Nineveh, and his palace, recovered by Layard's explorations, has yielded up treasures of the greatest value for the reconstruction of the history of the times.

His end was tragic enough. "It came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead" (2 Kings xix. 37). It seems that these two parricides were jealous of the favour shown by Sennacherib to Esarhaddon. This does not rest upon mere conjecture. Among the clay tablets in the British Museum there is one which contains the will of Sennacherib, executed sometime before his death, by which he bequeaths his valuables to Esarhaddon, his favourite son. An inscription has also been found which is supposed to record the indignation of Esarhaddon on hearing of his father's tragic death.

Esarhaddon was a great king and a worthy successor of Sennacherib, ruling from the Euphrates to the Nile. The Assyrian texts have much to tell of his expeditions—now into distant Media, again

to Meroe the stronghold of Tirhaka of Ethiopia, and yet again into Arabia. The kings of the Khatti and of the nations beyond the sea, kings from Cyprus and Syria, including Manasseh of Judah, obeyed his summons and paid him homage at Nineveh in 676 B.C. He had reigned little more than ten years when he associated with him on the throne his son, the famous Asshurbanipal, the Sardanapalus of the Greeks.

By the death of his father in 668 B.C. Asshurbanipal became sole ruler of Assyria. He is now generally recognised as "the great and noble Asnapper," whom Ezra mentions (iv. 10) in connection with another record of the deportation of conquered peoples of the east to the city of Samaria. Though nowhere else referred to by name in Scripture, he was known to the Greeks and Romans as Sardanapalus; but the character and history of that licentious and effeminate monarch are a mere caricature of the great Assyrian. He was great as a ruler and a warrior; but his distinction among Assyrian kings lay in his munificent patronage of literature and his conspicuous zeal in accumulating literary treasures of the past. If Nineveh was the Florence of that age, Asshurbanipal was its Lorenzo de' Medici, the Magnificent. It is largely to his patronage of learning, and to the inscriptions collected and copied by him for the great library at Nineveh which bore his name, that we owe our acquaintance not only with his age and exploits but with Babylonian antiquity two thousand years and more before his time,—its kings, its history, its art, its poetry, its religion.

The mere mention of his wars—his two campaigns against Egypt, his siege of Tyre, his expedition to Arabia, his subjugation of Elam—shows him to have been a conqueror of restless activity and irresistible might. There are interesting points of contact between his Annals and the Scripture narrative. Perhaps the most instructive of these is the illustration which the prophecy of Nahum against Nineveh receives from the account of the destruction of Thebes in Upper Egypt by Asshurbanipal. "In my second expedition," he says, "to Egypt and Ethiopia, I directed my march. Rudammon heard of the progress of my expedition, and that I had crossed over the borders of Egypt. Memphis he abandoned, and to save his life he fled into Thebes. After Rudammon I took the road; I went to Thebes, the strong city. A journey of a month and ten days on a difficult road after him they went to the midst of Thebes: the whole of it they [the troops] took and swept like a storm. To Nineveh my royal city they carried away the spoil and kissed my feet." It is this overthrow of Thebes (called in Scripture No-amon), still recent, that the prophet Nahum has in view when he apostrophises Nineveh, predicting for her a similar fate: "Art thou better than No-amon, that was situate among the rivers, that had the waters round about her, whose rampart was the sea [that is, the Nile], and her wall was of the sea? Ethiopia and Egypt were her strength, and it was infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers, Yet was she carried away, she went into captivity . . . They cast lots for her honourable men, and all her

great men were bound in chains" (Nahum iii. 8-10, R.V.) The word of the prophet was fulfilled to the letter. It was in 663 B.C. that the hundred-gated Thebes was overthrown, and in less than sixty years (606 B.C.) Nineveh, which had been the capital city of great conquerors and had "multiplied her merchants above the stars of heaven" (Nahum iii. 16), fell before the combined forces of the Medes and Babylonians,—fell suddenly and finally, to rise no more. There is good reason to believe that the king of Assyria, whose captains "took Manasseh in chains, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Babylon" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 11), was Asshurbanipal, who seems, like Esarhaddon before him, upon occasion to have held his court at Babylon, and there to have received Manasseh under such humiliating conditions. There is a list of tributary kings in which Manasseh, king of the land of Judah, is named; and the cylinder inscription, which is the chief source of Asshurbanipal's history, contains the following: "I gathered twenty-two princes of the Hittite land, who dwelt by the sea and in the midst of it, all of them I summoned." After a time he sent Manasseh back to his own land, so that his humiliation became his salvation (2 Chron. xxxiii. 13). In 626 B.C. Asshurbanipal is believed to have died; and it is a grim summary of his career which Maspéro gives us when he says that he surpassed all his predecessors in activity, in courage, in energy, and in cruelty,—as if Assyria, feeling itself on the brink of collapse, had been anxious to gather up in one man all the qualities which had made its

grandeur, and all the defects which had tarnished its glory.

The fall of Nineveh and the dissolution of the Assyrian empire left Babylon the leading power in the East. Egypt had meanwhile been recovering strength, and had begun to feel the prompting of her old ambitions. Under the reign of Asshur-banipal's son and successor, Egypt seems to have thrown off the Assyrian yoke, and conceived the idea of becoming invaders in turn. Pharaoh-Necho had set his heart upon Asiatic conquests, but the king of Judah, Josiah, who by the advice of Jeremiah declined an Egyptian alliance and felt bound by loyalty to his Assyrian suzerain, threw himself across the path of the Egyptian invader and lost his life in the battle of Megiddo, 609 B.C. His sons, Jehoahaz, who had reigned only three months when he was carried away captive to Egypt, and Jehoiakim, who reigned eleven years, were poor successors to such a king as Josiah; and when Jehoiachin had reigned but three months Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldæans from Babylon. Pharaoh-Necho, having disposed of the opposition of Josiah, pushed forward on his eastward march till he reached the Euphrates, and there was completely routed by the Babylonian army under Nebuchadnezzar in the decisive battle of Carchemish, 605 B.C. This victory left the Chaldæans undisputed masters of Western Asia. Judah and other countries simply exchanged the yoke of Assyria for that of Chaldæa, and in 604 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar, whose father Nabopolassar had recovered the independence of Babylon, and had

associated his son with him on the throne,[1] became sole king.

The new Babylonian empire into which the Chaldæans entered is really an example of arrested development. The Chaldæans, who are first mentioned in one of the many inscriptions of Asshurnazirpal, adopted the writing of the old Babylonians, followed their customs in commerce and trade, received their culture and science, even to the astrology for which they were famous; and the gods of ancient Babylon, Merodach and Nebo, became the gods of the Neo-Babylonian empire. Of this new empire Nebuchadnezzar was the powerful ruler. We do not need to dwell upon his history. The narratives in Second Kings and Second Chronicles, and the prophecies of Jeremiah, who gives his name as Nebuchadrezzar (after the cuneiform Nabu-kudarri-uzur, *Nebo protect the boundary*), record his treatment of his shifty vassals, the kings of Judah. A young and warlike Pharaoh, Hophra (Apries), had mounted the throne, and Zedekiah of Judah, thinking the occasion favourable for achieving his independence, and rejecting the advice of Jeremiah to the contrary, entered into an intrigue with the Egyptian king. Nebuchadnezzar would brook no such disloyalty from his vassals. He marched at once to the west and committed to Nebuzaradan the task of besieging Jerusalem. Meanwhile Pharaoh-Hophra with his army crossed the Egyptian frontier to the help of his allies, and compelled the Chaldæans to raise the siege of Jerusalem and meet him in the field. But here

[1] The Book of Daniel, by John Kennedy, D.D., p. 172 ff.

his courage failed him, and he retired in haste without offering battle. Anew the Babylonian army sat down before Jerusalem, and, after a siege of a year and a half, Jerusalem surrendered to hunger and the Chaldæans in 586 B.C. The captured Jewish king was brought to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, and, after having seen his children put to death, and having his eyes put out, Zedekiah was sent to languish and die in a Babylonian prison. Jerusalem was burnt with fire, its wall thrown down, and the people carried into captivity. Over the remnant left behind Gedaliah was appointed governor, with his residence at Mizpah, where also a Babylonian contingent remained behind. With the murder of Gedaliah even this last trace of the former kingdom of Judah was wiped out.

Of Nebuchadnezzar's annals little has survived to us, but that little is of importance as containing an allusion to his campaign in Egypt in the thirty-seventh year of his reign. In this connection, Jeremiah's prophecy (chap. xliii.) of Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Egypt, which was to be as powerless in his hands as the cloak which the shepherd wraps round him, has recently received a striking illustration. Jeremiah and other eminent members of the remnant of Judah had been carried off to Egypt against their will and in opposition to the word of the Lord. They had made Tahpanhes their place of refuge, thinking themselves safe in the territory and fortress of a king who had been an ally of Zedekiah, king of Judah. "Then came the word of the Lord unto Jeremiah in Tahpanhes,

saying, Take great stones in thine hand, and hide them in the clay in the pavement of brick, which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house in Tahpanhes, in the sight of the men of Judah ; and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel : I will send and take Nebuchadrezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will set his throne upon these stones that I have hid ; and he shall spread his royal pavilion over them." One of the most interesting discoveries in Lower Egypt is the finding, as is believed, of this very pavement of brick. It was discovered by Professor Flinders Petrie in June 1886. Describing a great open-air platform in a mound known as "the Palace of the Jew's daughter" at Defenneh, the modern name for Tahpanhes, such as is found now outside all great houses in Egypt, where the owner receives his friends and transacts business or drinks coffee with them, he says : "This platform is unmistakably the brickwork of the pavement which is at the entry of Pharaoh's house at Tahpanhes. Here the ceremony described by Jeremiah took place before the chiefs of the fugitives assembled on the platform, and here Nebuchadnezzar spread his royal pavilion. The very nature of the site is precisely applicable to all the events."[1] Taken along with other indications of his presence in Egypt, and especially in connection with an inscription which tells that Nebuchadnezzar penetrated as far south as Assouan, the presumption in favour of the correctness of Dr Flinders Petrie's identification is raised to a high degree of certainty.

[1] Nebesheh and Defenneh, p. 51.

It is not his campaigns, however, so much as his public buildings, that Nebuchadnezzar himself has made known to posterity. There is a paucity of inscriptions containing details of his warlike enterprises, but no such scarcity of inscriptions recording his work as a builder. This is, according to Tiele,[1] a distinguishing feature of the Babylonian as contrasted with the Assyrian inscriptions, due, as he thinks, to the greater independence and influence of the priesthood. An inscription of six hundred and twenty lines on a huge block of black basalt tells of the Hanging Gardens, one of the wonders of the ancient world, which Rassam believes he has discovered; the magnificent palace, of which remains have been found by the same explorer; the massive walls of the capital; the canal system, reminding us of the engineering works of Amenemhat of Egypt; and the restoration of the ancient temples of Sippar, Kuthah, Larsa, and other cities, in whose ruins bricks have been turned up bearing the name of Nebuchadnezzar. Especially did he favour the two great temples of Babylon—Borsippa and Bel-Merodach, and the temples of Nebo, Esagila, and E-zida. The superscription of a magnificent bronze threshold obtained by Rassam not far from the ruins of Birs-Nimroud bears that Nebuchadnezzar had restored the temple E-zida at Borsippa "to the honour of the god Nebo, who has lengthened his days." Considering what Nebuchadnezzar had done to give Babylon a glory which it had never attained among the cities of the old Babylonian empire, we are not surprised at the words

[1] Bab.-Ass. Geschichte, p. 417.

which the prophet Daniel puts into his mouth: "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for the house of the kingdom by the might of my power, and for the honour of my majesty?" Of the madness inflicted upon him for his pride nothing is told in the cuneiform records. But there is a tradition, handed down by Berosus, which, though divergent from that of the Scripture narrative, yet in a sense forms a parallel to it, and shows that something of the kind was known to antiquity.[1]

The greatness of the new Babylonian empire begun with Nebuchadnezzar, blazed forth in meteoric splendour during his long reign of forty-three years, and came to an end with him. "The head of gold" (Dan. ii. 36) soon gave place to "the breast and arms of silver." Evil-Merodach, who lifted up the head of Jehoiachin out of prison (2 Kings xxv. 27-30), Nergal-Sharezer, who has been identified with the chief magician of that name mentioned by Jeremiah (Jer. xxxix. 3, 13), and of whom a clay cylinder is preserved at Cambridge, and a son of this latter, in succession occupied the throne for a few years, when it was usurped by Nabunahid, or Nabonidus, the name by which he is better known. He was no connection of the family of Nebuchadnezzar, but after ascending the throne he seems to have married a daughter of that king, thinking to unite in his own person all the claims to royalty, and to secure the support of all parties. This may be inferred from Dan. v. 2, 11, 13, 18, 22, and it was quite in accordance with the ways of usurpers.

[1] Mürdter-Delitzsch, Geschichte von Babylonien und Assyrien, p. 250.

He was more a lover of the antiquities of his country than a powerful and successful ruler. It is to his antiquarian tastes and investigations that we owe the most valuable information we possess regarding the gods and temples and rulers of the old Babylonian *régime*. From his inscriptions, as we have already noted,[1] we obtain some of the most important data we possess for the chronology of ancient Babylonia. Nabonidus himself does not come into view in the Book of Daniel. It is his son Belshazzar who is mentioned, and who was likely associated with his father on the throne towards the close of his seventeen years' reign. In this dual sovereignty we are to find the explanation of the honour which was bestowed on Daniel, after his interpretation of the writing on the wall, in being made "third ruler of the kingdom" (Dan. v. 7, 16, 29). For long there was no trace of Belshazzar in the inscriptions, and the existence of any such person was confidently denied. But now inscriptions have been found which leave the historical character of Belshazzar in no manner of doubt. That he was the eldest son of Nabonidus —the "offspring of my heart," he calls him,—that he was intrusted with the supreme command of the army, and that his residence and special sphere of rule were in Babylon itself, are facts which appear to be made out. Contract tablets have been found which give interesting details about him.[2] One of these is dated the fifth year of Nabonidus, and tells the price at which "the secretary of Belshazzar, the

[1] See also article "Babylonia" in the Bible Dictionary.
[2] Records of the Past, second series, vol. iii. p. 124 ff.

son of the king," rents a house for three years. Another, mentioning a money transaction in which Belshazzar's steward was engaged for his master, is dated the twelfth year of Nabonidus, and in six years more Cyrus had entered Babylon.

Cyrus occupies a large place both in the Scripture history and the literature of Greece. Up to 1879 there were only two inscriptions of Cyrus known to exist,—the one consisting of four and the other of not more than ten words, just enough to authenticate his historical existence. But in 1879 Mr Hormuzd Rassam discovered in the ruins of Babylon a cylinder of unbaked clay, shaped like a barrel, though unfortunately mutilated. It was completely covered with writing, amounting to over a thousand words. This inscription, known as the Cylinder of Cyrus, together with the annalistic tablet of Nabonidus, shows Cyrus in a new light altogether. He is exhibited as no Zoroastrian monotheist, but rather as the young servant of Merodach, as presenting peace-offerings to the gods, and as restoring Nebo to his old shrine. Like the Romans in later times, and the Assyrians before his day, he thought it politic to venerate the gods of the people he had conquered. It appears, moreover, that Cyrus was no Persian, though he is thus described. Both he and his ancestors were kings of Anzan, a small territory in Elam. The empire which he founded was not Persian; Darius, the son of Hystaspes, was the founder of the Persian empire.

The new inscription of Cyrus discovered at Babylon [says the Abbé Vigouroux] shows us in this monarch not

the rigid monotheist, the strict adherent of Zoroastrianism, whom historians love to paint, but an accommodating statesman who adapts himself without scruple to the religious ideas of the peoples in the midst of whom he lives: it confirms, moreover, all that Scripture tells us of the relations between this monarch and the Jewish people, when it represents him speaking and acting as the sacred historians make him speak and act, recognising the protection and the authority of the gods of other peoples, and aiding them in conducting their worship and in the building of their temples. The new cylinder confirms, accordingly, the sacred narrator. It is chronologically the last testimony which Assyrian epigraphy renders to the Bible.[1]

These recently discovered inscriptions give a different complexion to some facts in connection with the conquests of Cyrus. It was not the Medes, as Herodotus records, but the Manda whom Cyrus overthrew under Istuvegu, the Astyages of the Greeks and of the Apocrypha. It further appears that Cyrus himself was engaged some distance from Babylon when Gobryas, his commander-in-chief, took the city, which fell not by the strategy which Cyrus is said to have employed of directing the river into a new channel, but rather from treachery and divided counsels within.[2] It has been thought that the exiled Jews in Babylon had been in communication with Cyrus, looking to him as the great liberator he proved himself to be. At any rate, the restoration of the Jews to their own land is seen to have been part of the policy which Cyrus adopted towards the nations under his sway, —a policy by which at the same time God's promises to Israel were fulfilled.

[1] Vigouroux, La Bible et les découvertes modernes, vol. iv. p. 419.
[2] See 'Recent Explorations in Bible Lands,' pp. 59, 60.

But the Cylinder of Cyrus is no longer, as the Abbé Vigouroux puts it, the last word of Assyrian epigraphy on the Bible history. As it is Nippur that has furnished the cuneiform inscriptions which carry us back to the remotest known antiquity, it is Nippur that is even at this moment furnishing us with the latest information that we possess outside the Bible record regarding the Jewish people in their exile. Professor Hilprecht, while working in the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Constantinople, examined some 730 clay tablets, which turned out to be the contents of the business archive of the wealthy and influential firm of Murashû Sons of Nippur, who lived in the time of Artaxerxes I. and Darius II. (464-405), in whose reigns the documents are dated.[1] The tablets, while furnishing valuable information concerning the cultivation of the ground around Nippur, the lease of canals, works for irrigating the fields and date-groves, and the payment of taxes by different classes of the population, are specially interesting to us because of the faithful picture they give of the life of Babylonia at the time when Ezra led forth the second party of Jewish exiles from Babylon to Palestine. Most remarkable of all in these tablets is the number of Jewish names known from the genealogical and other lists of Ezra and Nehemiah, and Kings and Chronicles, and other parts of the Bible. Professor Hilprecht infers from this that a considerable number of the Jewish exiles, carried away by Nebuchadnezzar after the capture of Jerusalem, were settled in Nippur and its neighbourhood. Of this

[1] The Babylonian Expedition, vol. ix.

fact there are various proofs. The Talmudic tradition which identifies Nippur with Calneh (Gen. x. 10) gains new force in the light of these facts. It is also interesting to know from two inscriptions deciphered by Professor Hilprecht that "the river Khebar in the land of the Chaldeans" by which Ezekiel saw his visions of the Cherubim, and for which up till now the cuneiform literature has been searched in vain, is identical with the Khabari, a large navigable canal not far from Nippur.[1]

In closing this lecture, and concluding the consideration of these ancient monuments, as far as the Old Testament is concerned, we cannot but be struck with the relation of the Word of God to those powerful empires and rulers of antiquity. It is the Word of God which has preserved to modern times the story of Babylonian rulers, Egyptian Pharaohs, and Assyrian kings, when their own records were swallowed up in the sands of the desert, or were buried deep in the marshes which had engulfed city and temple and palace. It is the Word of God which has furnished the surest clue to their recovery as well as supplied the impulse to explore and excavate in search of their remains; for, great as is the value of these relics for the reconstruction of the history of antiquity, their value for the elucidation and confirmation of the Bible history is the greatest of all.

[1] The Babylonian Expedition, vol. ix. pp. 27, 28.

LECTURE VIII.

THE TIMES OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT DISCOVERY.

When Christ was born at Bethlehem Herod the Great was approaching the close of his long and splendid reign as king of the Jews. Detested by the mass of his subjects because of his cruelties, he won for himself a high place in the favour of Augustus, his Roman suzerain, by his efficiency as a ruler and by the splendour of his public administration. In the end, however, he fell into disgrace; and Josephus records how Augustus gave him to understand that, whereas he had up till then treated him as a friend, he would henceforth treat him as a subject. Accordingly, when "there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed" (Luke ii. 1), or brought under a census, no exemption was made in the case of the kingdom of Herod, however distasteful and unpopular the requirement might be to him and his subjects; and "all went to be enrolled, every one into his own city" (Luke ii. 3).

Upon this point recent discovery has in a remarkable way confirmed the testimony of St Luke. The

enrolment itself and the note of time added by the evangelist—"This was the first enrolment, made when Quirinius was governing Syria" (Luke ii. 2, R.V.)—have been a source of no little perplexity to the student of the Gospels. Indeed so little has been hitherto known of the real character of this enrolment, and so entirely had all evidence of a periodic census disappeared, that this reference to it had been made the ground of serious attacks upon the trustworthiness and accuracy of St Luke as a historian. In vindication of St Luke's credit as an accurate narrator of facts, we can now assert, upon evidence which grows stronger every year, that there was such a periodic census or enrolment in the Syrian province of the empire, and that Christ was born during the time when the first enrolment of the series was being made in Palestine.[1] Some years ago the discovery was made by different workers, almost simultaneously, that a periodic census was made in Egypt under the Empire, and that the period intervening between the enrolments was fourteen years. It was shown that enrolments were made for the years 89-90, 103-104, 117-118, 131-132, and so on till 229-230 of our era. More recently evidence has come to light of enrolments for 75-76 and 61-62.[2] It is

[1] Expositor, April and June 1897; Was Christ born at Bethlehem? p. 131 ff. We follow Professor Ramsay of Aberdeen in the brief statement, which is all we can afford space to make regarding a most interesting subject.

[2] Professor Ramsay mentions, in a postscript to the preface of 'Was Christ born at Bethlehem?' the discovery of a papyrus which is a household enrolment paper belonging to the census of A.D. 20, proving conclusively his theory as to the origin of the periodic enrolments from the time of Augustus.

of special interest to notice that the technical terms, *ἀπογραφή* and *ἀπογράφειν*, used of the Egyptian census, are the very terms which St Luke employs. Though the Egyptian year was employed, the census was carried out by Roman officials, and formed part of the imperial system of administration. But the evidence is not confined to Egypt. We have evidence of periodic enrolments in Syria as well. In the Acts of the Apostles (v. 37) St Luke mentions "the days of the enrolment," "the great enrolment," which is reckoned to have taken place in A.D. 7, when Quirinius was governor of Syria a second time, and there was a numbering of the people and a valuation of their property. But independently of St Luke there is evidence of enrolment in the province of Syria;[1] and the reasons which required periodic enrolments by households in Egypt held good in Syria also. It is shown by the enrolment papers found in Egypt that the census had a household or tribal character, which required the families to go up to the tribal centre, which in the case of Joseph and Mary was Bethlehem, and that the enforcement of it in this form was a concession to Jewish feeling rather than otherwise. The conclusion is that there was a system of periodic enrolment in the province Syria

[1] Professor Ramsay says: "The most important fact is that we have clear evidence, quite independent of Luke, that the first, second, and fourth periodic enrolments were observed in the province Syria." The first is on the authority of the early Christian father Tertullian; the second is from an inscription accidentally discovered at Venice; and the fourth is due to Tacitus. See 'Was Christ born at Bethlehem?' p. 167 ff.

according to a fourteen-year cycle, and the first enrolment was made in the year 8 B.C.,—strictly the Syrian year beginning in the spring of 8 B.C. From a consideration of the attitude of Herod to the enrolment, it is reasonable to believe that some time elapsed before he proceeded to give effect to the orders received by him from Rome; but taking everything into account, Professor Ramsay concludes that 6 B.C. was the year of the birth of Christ.

Many of the scenes associated with the life and ministry of Jesus have received illustration from travel and exploration in the Holy Land. A place which has been rendered for ever sacred by the feet of Christ is Jacob's Well, about two miles east of Nablous, the ancient Shechem. The site is acknowledged by Jews, Moslems, and Christians alike. What a multitude of Christian pilgrims of all lands have upon its brink breathed forth a prayer to Him who there taught us that God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth! When examined by Captain Anderson, R.E., in 1866, it was found to be 75 feet deep, but there can be no doubt that the original depth was greater, as quantities of rubbish have fallen into it, and passers-by for centuries have thrown stones into it. In 1881, the depth was diminished to 67 feet. In that year a visitor,[1] disappointed at finding merely a dark irregular hole amid a mass of ruins instead of the remains of a well, made an interesting dis-

[1] Rev. Chas. Wright Barclay in 'Palestine Exploration Quarterly Statement,' 1881, p. 212.

covery. He had clambered down into the vault over the well, and noticed a dark crack between the stones. Removing some stones and earth, he was able to trace part of a curved aperture in a large slab of stone. He cleared away more earth and stones, and distinguished the circular mouth of the well, though it was blocked by an immense mass of stones. Calling in help to remove this mass, he succeeded in the attempt, and the opening of the well was clear. "It is impossible," says this traveller, "to describe our feelings as we gazed down the open well, and sat on the ledge on which doubtless the Saviour rested, and felt with our fingers the grooves in the stone caused by the ropes by which the water-pots were drawn up." It is true the identification has been challenged, and it has been said there was no such place as Sychar in the time of our Lord. Professor George Adam Smith has well met the objections, and shown that the charge of ignorance on the part of the author of the Fourth Gospel is unfounded (John iv. 5 ff.)[1]

It is impossible [says Professor Smith] to say whether the well is now dry, for many feet of it are choked with stones. Robinson says there is a spring in it; Conder says it fills by infiltration. If either of these be correct, then we can understand the double titles given to it in the narrative, both of which our version renders by *well*. It is Jacob's fountain, πήγη (v. 5); but the pit, τὸ φρέαρ, is deep (v. 11); and *Jacob gave us the pit* (v. 12). It is by little touches like these, and by the agreement of the rest of the topography,—Mount Gerizim, and the road from Judæa to Galilee (as well as by

[1] Historical Geography of the Holy Land, pp. 367-375.

the unbroken traditions of three religions),—that we feel sure that this is the Jacob's Well intended by the writer, and that he had seen the place.

The exact site of Bethabara (John i. 28) has long been a subject of doubt and difficulty, and as it bears upon the accuracy of the writer of the Fourth Gospel, it is specially worthy of notice. It has been assumed that because Jerusalem and all Judæa and all the region around about Jordan (Matt. iii. 5) went out to John the Baptist, and went to him apparently in the neighbourhood of what is now known as the "Pilgrims' Bathing-place," opposite Jericho, Bethabara must be located there. The question then arose, How could Jesus have spent two days there (John i. 29-35), and on the third day have been present at Cana of Galilee, traversing a distance of eighty miles? As far as Bethabara is concerned, the difficulty has been solved by a discovery of Colonel Conder's. He found Abarah given as the name of one of the main Jordan fords, just above where the river Jalud, flowing down the valley of Jezreel, falls into the Jordan. It would thus coincide with Beth-barah in Judges vii. 24. As the distance of a Bethabara located at this spot would be only twenty-two miles from the most probable site of Cana, the identification of Colonel Conder seems certain; only it is not necessary to assume that this was the place where Jesus Himself was baptised. John did not always baptise at the same place. He baptised at Ænon, near to Salim, because there were many fountains there (John iii. 23); and the synoptists clearly imply that He baptised at the Jordan fords

near Jericho. That Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist at the traditional site of the baptism near Jericho; that immediately after He was tempted of the devil; that afterwards, on His way to Galilee, He found the Baptist engaged at Bethabara; that there He won the allegiance of several of the Baptist's disciples; and that He went with them from thence to Cana to the marriage,—is a sequence of events which meets all the requirements alike of the topography and the history. It is true the difficulty has been got rid of in another way. The manuscript authorities against reading Bethabara are overwhelming, and "Bethany beyond Jordan" is now read in all editions of the Greek text. Origen says that most MSS. read Bethania, but he himself adopts Bethabara. Chrysostom likewise accepts it, mentioning, however, the older reading. Jerome mentions Bethabara only. Colonel Conder[1] suggests an explanation of the double reading as follows: "We can scarcely suppose the present reading to be a late invention; but it is not difficult to reconcile the two, if the site of the Abara ford be accepted, for Bethania beyond Jordan is evidently the province of Batanea, already described as extending from Pella to the Sea of Galilee, and as the ford now discovered is north of Pella, it leads into Batanea where the village of Bethabara would have stood."

There are no places more intimately associated with the public ministry of Jesus than the cities by the Galilean lake, where so many of His dis-

[1] Handbook to the Bible, p. 320.

courses were spoken, and so many of His mighty works were done. Of the nine cities on the Lake of Galilee which were flourishing in the time of Christ, the sites of several have been identified. Tiberias, then new and half Greek, stands upon its ancient site,—although it is not mentioned in the Gospels, and the feet of Christ seem never to have trodden its streets,—and it has a population of about 6000, of whom 5000 are Jews. Some ten boats go out from it to fish in the lake. Magdala is represented by the modern Mejdel, a miserable village a little to the north. These two are the only places now inhabited about the lake. Bethsaida no longer remains, but various sites have been proposed for it — one on the east bank of the Jordan near the river's mouth, another on the west coast of the Sea of Galilee at Ain Tabighah, where a dilapidated mill and a copious fountain are now the chief objects that meet the eye. About a mile and a-half northward, upon a low promontory running out into the lake and at its north-eastern corner, is Tell Hum. Amid tall weeds and huge boulders are fallen columns, large and exquisitely carved, which have been claimed as remains of Capernaum. The ruins close to the water's edge have been called the White Synagogue; and if the identification of Tell Hum with Capernaum is correct, as Sir Charles Wilson has long contended, then we have here the site of the synagogue which was built by the Roman centurion (Luke vii. 4, 5), and in which our Lord pronounced His great discourse on the Bread of Life (John vi.) The identification is opposed, how-

ever, by Colonel Conder and others, who claim Khan Minyeh, about two and a-half miles from Tell Hum, as the site, and formed upon Minai, a nickname given to the followers of Christ in the Talmud, as determining the Galilean home of Christ. There is no certainty, for there are difficulties as to both. The area within which it must have lain is, however, greatly narrowed by exploration and research, and over the ground between the rival sites the feet of Christ have often trod as He went to and from "His own city." Chorazin is to be found perhaps at Kerâseh, northwards from Tell Hum; and Khersa, on the eastern side of the lake, may stand for Gergesa, where Jesus was met by the two demoniacs coming out of the tombs (Matt. viii. 28). "Wherever these three — Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin — may have been, the wellnigh complete obliteration of all of them is remarkable in this, that they were the very three towns which our Saviour condemned to humiliation."[1]

It is round Jerusalem that the associations connected with the ministry of Jesus are gathered into a focus. Jerusalem was the capital of the land, as Herod the Great had restored and adorned it. The palaces which Herod had built were unrivalled for magnificence and wealth. His own residence, built, it has been supposed, upon the site of the ancient palace of David, was extensive and splendid, with cloisters, and gardens, and fountains, and a lofty enclosing wall. He added towers wherewith to strengthen the fortifications of the city—Hippicus,

[1] Smith, Historical Geography of the Holy Land, p. 458.

Phasaelus, Mariamne. Of these, Hippicus, which still forms part of the fortifications, and greets the traveller as he enters by the Jaffa Gate, is the only building which has survived the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. The citadel of Antonia rose over against the Temple, and communicated with it by a flight of steps. It was the prætorium of Pilate, mentioned by the evangelist John (xviii. 28-33; xix. 9). It was garrisoned by Roman soldiers, who were sometimes required to step in and quell disturbances that arose at the Jewish feasts (Acts xxi. 26 ff.); and it is a singular coincidence that the Turkish soldiers, who now have similar duties to perform at Easter in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and keep the Latin and Greek and other Christians from flying at each others' throats, have their barracks on its ancient site. Herod had also replaced the old Temple of Zerubbabel by another, outrivalling Solomon's—

> "Far off appearing like a mount
> Of alabaster, topt with golden spires."

He had so enlarged it as to include all, or nearly all, the present noble sanctuary, and there were approaches leading to it from the western side of the city. Josephus mentions four gates in the western quarter of the enclosures of the Temple, the first leading to the king's palace by a passage over the intermediate valley. The arch known as "Robinson's arch was probably the same as Zion Bridge, mentioned in connection with Agrippa and Titus by Josephus. It would therefore be a conspicuous feature of Jerusalem in the days of

Christ; and our Saviour and His disciples probably gazed often upon this lofty arch crossing the ravine."[1] Running along the east wall of the Temple area was Solomon's Porch (John x. 23), a double cloister, originally built and ornamented by Solomon, and commanding a magnificent view of the Kidron valley and the Mount of Olives opposite. Warren tells us that the wall still exists, but all trace of the porch has disappeared. Of the actual Temple which Jesus saw and in which Jesus taught, nothing but the walls of the great platform now remain, and that inscription forbidding Gentiles to venture beyond the partition wall, now preserved in the Imperial Ottoman Museum in Constantinople.[2]

Of sacred sites which have received elucidation, if not decisive settlement, of recent years, we may mention further the Pool of Bethesda. The Virgin's Fountain, which supplies the Pool of Siloam by means of the tunnel of which we have had occasion to speak, has often been supposed to be the Pool of Bethesda, and Sir J. W. Dawson among others has lent the authority of his name to this identification. It is an intermittent spring, and its waters are often resorted to by men and women suffering from rheumatic complaints. But it is too far from the Sheep Gate to be the pool mentioned by St John. As far back as 1872 M. Clermont-Ganneau suggested that the Pool of Bethesda might be found near the Church of St Anne, where tradition has located the house of the

[1] Recent Discoveries on the Temple Hill, p. 97.
[2] Dean Farrar, The Herods, p. 140.

mother of Mary, calling it Beth Anna, "house of Anne." The expression has the same meaning as Bethesda, for both of them signify "House of Mercy." This suggestion has borne fruit, and in 1888 what is thought to be the ancient Pool of Bethesda was found a short distance north-west of the Church of St Anne. It is 55 feet long from east to west, and measures 12½ feet in breadth. A flight of twenty-four steps leads down into the pool from the eastern scarp of rock. Dr Schick, the German architect, who took a lively interest in the discovery, soon came upon a sister-pool, lying end to end with the other, 60 feet long and of the same breadth as the first. The first pool was arched in by five arches, while five corresponding arches ran along the side of the other pool. At a later period a church was built over the pool by the Crusaders, and they seem to have been so far impressed by the fact of five arches below that they shaped their crypt into five arches in imitation. They left an opening for getting down to the water; and further, as a crowning proof that they regarded the pool as Bethesda, they painted on the wall of the crypt a fresco representing the angel troubling the water. Eusebius, writing in the fourth century, refers to these twin pools; and the Bordeaux Pilgrim, A.D. 333, speaking of two great pools at the side of the Temple,—one on either hand as he entered Jerusalem from the east,—refers to the twin pools as being now within the city. "They have five porches," he says, "and are called Bethesda. Here the sick of many years were wont to be healed." This testimony agrees well with the

results of recent discovery, and it would seem as if a long-sought-for and long-disputed site had at last been found.[1]

The site upon which the Christian traveller above all wishes to have certainty is Golgotha, the place of the Crucifixion. The tradition of more than fifteen centuries has located it within the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Within this venerable Christian sanctuary are shown to pilgrims from every country under heaven the Pillar of the Scourging, and the Chapels of the Parting of the Raiment, of the Crowning with Thorns, and of the Cross itself. The Chapel of the Sepulchre, a white marble structure 26 feet long and 18 feet wide, has taken the place of the new tomb hewn out of the limestone rock, "wherein never man before was laid." The tradition of centuries has, however, been called in question since the days of Dr Robinson. Its truth would require the site to have been without the wall of the city, for is it not said that "Jesus, bearing the Cross, went forth into a place called the place of a skull" (John xix. 17, 18), and that "He suffered without the gate" (Heb. xiii. 12)? The Church of the Holy Sepulchre is not only near the very heart of the modern city, but must always have been within the line of the second wall, and therefore does not conform to the requirements of the Gospel narrative. In 1886 a portion of the old wall was found in a position which renders it all but certain that the traditional sites of the crucifixion and the burial must have been

[1] G. St Clair, Buried Cities and Bible Countries, pp. 326-329.

within the course of the walls as they existed at the time of Christ's death. Although the traditional site has able defenders, it cannot be upheld in the face of the facts brought to light by recent exploration.

The question still remains, Where is the true site? It has been located on the west bank of the Kidron north of St Stephen's Gate; it has been placed on Mount Moriah, and by a great authority, Mr Fergusson, under the Mosque of Omar itself. The site which has of late received the most support is a knoll of rock of rounded form and covered with shallow soil and grass, just outside the northern wall of the city, and a little distance from the Damascus Gate. Under it is the cave called Jeremiah's Grotto, and there are two holes in the face of the steep and rocky bank terminating the knoll, which look like the sockets of eyes in a skull. The resemblance of the hillock to a skull is remarkable. This site took hold of the late General Gordon, who worked it out in his 'Reflections on Palestine'; and it is, moreover, strongly upheld by Sir J. W. Dawson, in his 'Egypt and Syria.' It was supported before them by Colonel Conder, who points out—the suggestion was made to him by Dr Chaplin, so long medical missionary in Jerusalem—that the place of public execution in Roman times was situated north of the city.[1] It satisfies the requirements of the Gospel narrative—in being without the gate yet near the city, in being near to a road leading out into the country, and in having gardens or tombs close by, for in that

[1] Handbook to Bible, p. 355.

neighbourhood was the chief cemetery of Jerusalem. It has against it, to be sure, the want of any ancient tradition marking out the scene of a transaction so stupendous. But this is, perhaps, as near to a certain identification as we are likely to attain. The words of the venerable author of 'The Land and the Book' are worthy to be quoted as regards the essence of the matter. He had himself attained to no certainty as to the precise site, and he says: "Far better rest contented with the undoubted fact that somewhere without the walls of this very limited platform of the Holy City the Son of man was lifted up, 'that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life.' It is Himself that men must believe in, not His sepulchre. It is not on Golgotha we must look for salvation, but to the precious blood of the Lamb of God there shed, which taketh away the sin of the world."[1]

Within the last quarter of a century notable results have been achieved by archæological research in elucidation of the Acts of the Apostles, and especially of the missionary journeys of St Paul. Scholars and historians like Bishop Lightfoot, Professor Mommsen, Professor E. Curtius, and M. Waddington have laid New Testament students under great obligations by their valuable contributions to the history of the early Church, based upon the numerous and important discoveries of recent years. Professor Sterrett of America, Sir Charles Wilson, who was formerly Consul-General of Anatolia, and most of all, Professor W. M. Ramsay of Aberdeen,

[1] Southern Palestine and Jerusalem, p. 487.

to whom the valleys of the Mæander and the Lykos, and the sites of ancient cities and bishoprics of Phrygia, are as familiar as Deeside and the Grampians, have done inestimable service to scholarship, especially New Testament scholarship, by the collection of inscriptions, by the following up of routes and roads, and by the accumulation and sifting of materials with results which no critic or commentator can henceforth overlook. Professor Ramsay, in particular, has made this whole field his own, and his 'Historical Geography of Asia Minor' and 'Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia,' both packed full of facts, his 'Church in the Roman Empire,' his 'St Paul the Traveller and the Roman Citizen,' his 'Impressions of Turkey during Twelve Years' Wanderings,' are storehouses of valuable information, of original and independent critical and historical results, and striking and brilliant descriptions. His crowning achievement, to which his travels, and collections and study of inscriptions, and wide and accurate classical learning, have all contributed, is his vindication of St Luke, the author of the Acts, as a historian of the first rank, and of the Acts of the Apostles itself as a model of unity and individuality in style. Against the various critical reconstructions of this New Testament book, especially against the theory which divides up the Acts as the Pentateuch has been divided, and which finds in the Acts a Hellenistic document, a Petrine document, and a Pauline document, worked into one volume by a Judaising editor, and then again worked over by an anti-Judaist editor, and finally given its present form by a third

editor who incorporated an additional document and laid on a number of small touches, Professor Ramsay enters an uncompromising protest. Nor is he content to do this only. He shows how, by the adoption of the South-Galatian theory, of which he is the most resolute exponent, St Luke's narrative can dispense with forced explanations of discrepancies, because it is then free from discrepancies and is seen to be admirable in balance and proportion, thoroughly consistent, and harmonious and accurate in its details. No finer example of the value of historical and archæological learning in correcting the critical refinements and subjective analysis of the mere book-student has been given to the world than is to be found in Professor Ramsay's 'St Paul the Traveller' and his 'Church in the Roman Empire.'

We have mentioned Professor Ramsay because his work is the freshest and most recent in this important field. But there are others to whom we are under obligation. Conybeare and Howson's 'Life and Epistles of St Paul' turned to excellent account the results of travel and exploration available in their day, and showed what could be done by attention to geographical detail, and historical association, and archæological discovery to impart life and colour to the narrative of the Acts, with a result all the more remarkable because Dean Howson, who wrote the descriptive accounts, had not up to the time of writing visited the scenes he has so graphically described. Dean Farrar in his 'Life of St Paul' has in his own graphic and vigorous way made use of the materials available, and used them with such

effect that in the judgment of many his 'Life of St Paul' is the best of his works. And no scholar was more quick to perceive the value or more prompt to make use of the archæological discoveries of recent years than the late Bishop Lightfoot. Readers of the introductions to his editions of 'Philippians,' 'Galatians,' and 'Colossians,' and of his noble work on 'Ignatius,' are aware how well he turns to account the discoveries made on the sites of the seven churches of Asia, and other places associated with the early years of Christianity.

The story of the life and work of St Paul, as set before us in the Acts and in his Epistles, is open to be tested at many points by contemporary history, and politics, and topography. There is, for example, no fact more obvious from the Acts of the Apostles than the presence and influence of the Jewish population in the towns and cities of Asia Minor in St Paul's day. At Antioch of Pisidia and Iconium St Paul found them numerous and hostile. Now this Jewish population is vouched for by Cicero, who, as governor of Cilicia, had ample means of knowing about the people of that and neighbouring provinces. Professor Ramsay has discovered inscriptions which bear witness to the same fact a century later than Cicero's day, and in one of his chapters on the 'Cities and Bishoprics of Phrygia' he dwells upon the subject in detail. Then, again, the sites of some of the cities visited by St Paul on his missionary journeys have within the last few years been either approximately or absolutely discovered. Antioch of Pisidia has

since Arundell's time, more than sixty years ago, been identified with Yalobatch, and was situated on one of the great lines of communication running east and west through Asia Minor. Iconium has been found at the modern Konia, a place of 30,000 inhabitants; Lystra, guessed at by Colonel Leake, and narrowly missed by Sir Charles Wilson and Professor Ramsay, was discovered by Professor Sterrett a dozen years ago at Khatyn Serai—"The Lady's Mansion"; and Derbe is believed to be found at Gudelissin, where a large mound like an Assyrian *tel* shows traces of an ancient town. The narrative of St Paul's first missionary journey in Acts xiii. and xiv., through Pamphylia and the Taurus Mountains from Perga to Antioch of Pisidia, is wholly consistent with what we have learned of that country from modern travellers. Referring to the "perils of rivers, perils of robbers" (2 Cor. xii. 26, 27), to which St Paul and his companions were exposed in this part of the journey, Professor Ramsay gives inscriptions which have recently been found in the Pisidian highlands bringing out precisely those features. The first is a thank-offering to Jupiter, Neptune, and other gods, and also to the river Eurus, for preservation from drowning; the second is an epitaph over the grave of a policeman who had been killed by robbers; the third makes reference to *gens d'armes* of various classes required to keep order in an unruly country; and the fourth tells of a *stationarius*, one of the road guards, part of whose duty it was to capture runaway slaves, always the most dangerous of brigands. "Probably the part of his life which

St Paul had most in mind when he wrote about the perils of rivers and of robbers which he had faced in his journeys was the journey from Perga across Taurus to Antioch and back again."[1]

We might follow the author of the Acts through all his rich and graphic narrative of St Paul's missionary journeys, and find proof from excavations in Cyprus, at Rome, Thessalonica, and Ephesus, of the accuracy in detail, which is a sure token of the trustworthiness of the writer. Valuable and important are the discoveries which have been made in Rome, from which numerous inscriptions have been obtained, throwing light upon the society of the capital of the Cæsars at the time when St Paul was a prisoner there, and elucidating passages in his Epistles to the Romans, and especially to Philippians, Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon, written during his captivity. Bishop Lightfoot has shown, for example, that "the household of Cæsar" was a term embracing a vast number of persons, not only in Rome but in the provinces, all of whom were either actual or former slaves of the emperor, filling every possible description of office, more or less domestic. The burial inscriptions of members of the imperial household found near Rome afford a strikingly large number of coincidences with the list of persons saluted in the last chapter of Romans — Amplias, Urbanus, Apelles, Tryphæna, Tryphosa, Patrobas, Philologus, and Julia. Bishop Lightfoot infers from this evidence the great probability that

[1] Professor Ramsay, Expositor, January 1892. See also 'Church in the Roman Empire,' p. 23 ff.

the saints greeted in the last chapter of Romans [1] are the same who send greetings from Rome to the Philippian Church.

Thessalonica, which St Paul visited on his first missionary journey to Europe, and to the church of which he addressed his first Epistles,—possibly the first books of the New Testament canon,—has lately yielded important confirmation of the accuracy of St Luke in detail. St Paul reached Thessalonica by the Egnatian Way, passing Amphipolis and Apollonia *en route*. Thessalonica had a long and famous history. Xerxes, as Herodotus tells us, halted his army there, his camp occupying the whole seaboard from Therma, as it was then called, to the Haliacmon, the modern Vistrizza. Thucydides tells us how the Athenians took it at the commencement of the Peloponnesian war, and restored it to Perdiccas as the price of his alliance. Philip of Macedon extended it, and gave it the name of Thessalonica in remembrance of a victory over the Thessalians, and made it one of his chief posts. And to come down nearer the Christian era, Cicero in his exile resided in Thessalonica; and we have letters of the great orator from Thessalonica a hundred years before St Paul wrote his letters to the Thessalonians. In the time of St Paul it was the most famous and the most populous town of the province of Macedonia. It was a free city like Tarsus, and it owed its privileges to the services it had rendered to Octavius, who became the Emperor Augustus, before the battle of Philippi. When St Paul was

[1] Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 171 ff.

in Thessalonica, the remembrance of the privileges bestowed by Augustus was still fresh in the minds of the people, and the city professed great devotion to the emperor. Hence the greatest crime the slanderers of the apostle could impute to him was that "he did contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, one Jesus" (Acts xvii. 7). It has been pointed out[1] that there is a striking contrast between the language of Thessalonians and that of Philippians, all the more remarkable because of their nearness to one another. At Thessalonica there is no mention of the rights and privileges of a Roman citizen, but, as at Jerusalem, the populace, a mixture of Greeks and Jews, are zealous to show themselves friends of Cæsar. No word of lictors as in a colony, but an assembly of the people (δῆμος) as in a free city. There is no question of offence to Roman religion, but solely of fidelity to the emperor. And lastly, the magistrates at Thessalonica are not στρατηγοί as at Philippi, but πολιτάρχαι (Acts xvii. 6), a title peculiar to Thessalonica.

Here, then, was a test of St Luke's accuracy as a historian. In the whole compass of Greek literature no such word as πολιτάρχης was to be found. It was gravely affirmed by commentators of note that it was a blunder for πολιάρχης, which was a word known to the dictionary. But the inscriptions of the time have preserved it. An inscription was found and published at Milan before the middle of last century, and recopied at Salonica by Pococke

[1] Abbé Vigouroux, La Bible et les découvertes modernes, vol. v. p. 236.

the Eastern traveller, mentioning a list of seven Politarchs, three of whom significantly enough bore the names of three of St Paul's friends mentioned in the Acts, or the Epistles,—Sopater (of Berea, Acts xx. 4), Secundus (of Thessalonica, Acts xx. 4), and Gaius (of Macedonia, Acts xix. 29).[1] A few years later another inscription was brought from Thessalonica to Paris on a fragment of marble, which read, "Mark being Politarch." In an inscription dated the year 143 A.D., first published by the Frenchman Le Bas, we find not only the πολιτάρχαι but the δῆμος and the βουλή referred to (Acts xvii. 5). Within the last twenty or twenty-five years other three inscriptions have been discovered at Salonica, giving the names of six, two, and five Politarchs respectively. One of them is dated the year 46 A.D., just six years before St Paul visited Thessalonica—surely an ample justification of St Luke in using such an expression for the magistrates of the place, and a marvellous evidence of the perfect accuracy of his narrative.

We can now subject the historian of the Acts to a test of the same character by means of the Ephesian

[1] This statement, which is that of Conybeare and Howson, 'The Life and Epistles of St Paul,' p. 259, is in error as to the number of Politarchs mentioned in this inscription, which is not seven but six, and indeed may be only five. The inscriptions now known for certain as attesting the existence of the office of Politarch, mostly in Macedonian cities, are seventeen in number, to which may fall to be added two more if probable restorations are accepted. An account of these inscriptions is given by Professor Burton of Chicago in the 'American Journal of Theology,' July 1898, to whose courtesy I am obliged, through the kindness of the Rev. Peter Crosbie, missionary of the Church of Scotland at Salonica, for a separate copy of his scholarly paper. See Appendix, Note VIII., p. 325.

inscriptions which have been discovered within the last thirty years, and recently published for the Trustees of the British Museum. These inscriptions have been issued under the editorship of Canon E. L. Hicks of Manchester, as part of a great series of ancient Greek inscriptions,[1] in a form likely to be exceedingly serviceable to scholars. The inscriptions from Ephesus range in point of time from the fifth century before Christ to the fourth century of our era, although by far the greater number belong to the Christian period. They consist of public decrees, of honours to emperors and public men, of dedications to religious worship, and the like, furnishing a vast amount of new information about the city, and, as Professor Ramsay puts it, "they add greatly to our power of criticising the nineteenth chapter of Acts." It is something to have the authority of a scholar who has made this field so entirely his own for saying that the Scripture narrative comes well through the test, inasmuch as no error has yet been found in it, and a number of accurate touches vouching for the exact knowledge and the veracity of the historian have been discovered.

There are few sites of ancient cities so utterly desolate as is now the site of ancient Ephesus. The very name of Ephesus has ceased from the plain and the hillsides where the glory of the ancient metropolis of Asia lies entombed. It is now known as Ayasaluk, a corruption of ἅγιος

[1] Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum. Edited by Sir C. T. Newton, K.C.B. Part III., Priene, Iasos, and Ephesos, by Rev. E. L. Hicks, M.A.

θεόλογος, a squalid Turkish village, the nearest inhabited spot to the site of ancient Ephesus, and itself the miserable relic of a town which gathered round the great Church of St John the Divine as Ephesus began to decline and disappear. Of all the great temples of antiquity, the Artemisium, or Temple of Diana, was the only one whose site had disappeared without a trace. As Gibbon wrote of it more than a century ago, "The desolation is complete, and the Temple of Diana or the Church of Mary will equally elude the search of the curious traveller."[1] As the traveller leaves the Ayasaluk station of the Smyrna and Aidin railway, now extended up the Mæander valley as far as Laodicea and Colossæ, he passes a row of piers representing the remains of a Roman aqueduct, on the top of which the storks have their nests, and then strikes across a strip of poorly cultivated land towards the two ranges of hills on the slopes of which Ephesus was built. It is not yet quite settled which is which, but we shall call the lower and nearer Pion (it is sometimes spelt Prion), and the higher and more distant Coressus. In the bosom of the hillside is the cave of the Seven Sleepers, and crossing the eastern shoulder we come down upon the Magnesian Gate, so called because the road through it from the city led to Magnesia in the Mæander valley. By the same gate another road led for a distance of more than a mile to the famous Temple of Diana. When this road was opened up in the recent excavations, it was found to be thirty-five feet broad, paved

[1] Decline and Fall, vol. xi. p. 417.

with solid marble, deeply scored with the tracks of wheels in four distinct ruts, showing the constant passing and repassing of chariots and other vehicles. It was along this Via Sacra from the Temple that the images of the goddess were borne in procession, and thence by the Magnesian Gate through the principal streets of the city. In the hollow between the lower and higher range of hills is the so-called tomb of St Luke, and a little farther on the Odeum, or Music Hall, the orchestra of which, when cleared of rubbish, was found quite perfect, and has yielded some notable inscriptions. On the western side of Pion are the remains of the Great Theatre. The vast amphitheatre is quite distinguishable in its general outline, the stage is in a state of tolerable preservation, and even the rows of seats rising tier upon tier are fairly discernible. It must have held in the days of its glory an immense audience. The most moderate computation says 24,000 spectators, and others speak of 56,000, and even more.[1] It was to the Great Theatre that the infuriated Ephesians, as we are told in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, rushed with shouts of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." In the newly published inscriptions there is abundant evidence of the intimate relations subsisting between the Theatre, which was the great place of popular assembly, and the Temple of Diana. Upon the stage inscriptions of the greatest interest and value were found, to one of which, telling of an

[1] In a visit paid to Ephesus on April 7, 1898, I found a new series of excavations in progress under the Austrian Government. The sites to be excavated were the Theatre, the Forum, and the Agora, but so far as I have heard no results have yet been published.

endowment for the worship of Diana, and describing the route of the processions from the Temple to the city, we shall presently refer. From the amphitheatre looking westward the traveller has an entrancing view of the blue Ægean with the isles of Greece beyond. Down at his feet is the Asian Meadow, mentioned in a famous passage of Homer, and giving its name to the great continent of Asia (Homer, Iliad ii. 461). Through the low-lying and fever-haunted marshes the lazy Cayster, celebrated in the same passage, now wanders in a sluggish stream to the sea. Where the bulrushes are tallest was Panormus, the famous harbour of Ephesus. The central position of the city, terminating one of the great commercial highways of Asia and receiving the ships of the lands of the West, made Ephesus, like Alexandria and Tyre, one of the great marts of the ancient world. The commerce of Ephesus was in its day world-wide. From Syria to the Pillars of Hercules, from Abyssinia to the Crimea, and on the great eastern trade-routes to the Euphrates and Mesopotamia, its merchants were to be found. On its wharves and quays might have been seen the oil and the barley and the wheat of its own fertile plains, together with the wheat and other produce of Mesopotamia; horses and mules from the mountains of Armenia, and slaves from the borders of the Caspian, all ready to be shipped to Tyre and Alexandria and the lands of the West. On the same wharves might have been seen the purples of Tyre and the fine linen of Egypt, with purples and jewellery of home manufacture, ready to be loaded

on camels and conveyed to the inland regions of the north and east in return. To the port of Ephesus came also shiploads of pilgrims, who found their way by one of the canals formed from the Caÿster to a landing quay close to the western entrance of Diana's temple, and these pilgrims would carry home with them as memorials of their visit, as Russian pilgrims now carry water from the Jordan and mother-of-pearl images of the Virgin from Bethlehem, silver statuettes of the goddess "whom all Asia and the world worshipped."[1]

For great as Ephesus was in commerce, she was still more renowned as a sanctuary of ancient worship. For centuries the worship of Artemis was established there,—an Asiatic religion in a setting of Greek mythology and culture,—and the earthly dwelling-place of the goddess was a temple reckoned among the seven wonders of the world. It is difficult to credit the descriptions that have come down to us of its glories.[2] It stood upon a basement of ten steps; it was 425 feet long and 220 wide. It was borne up by 127 pillars 60 feet high, each the gift of a king, thirty-six of them ornamented with colour, gilding, and metal. Like the temples of ancient Greece, it was open to the sky without a roof. It was adorned with sculptures and paintings of the greatest masters. Phidias, Praxiteles, Parrhasius, and Apelles, the most renowned artists of the ancient world, were represented by the choicest works, dedicated to the

[1] For a graphic description of ancient Ephesus, see Ernst Curtius, Ephesos: Ein Vortrag.

[2] Gibbon, Decline and Fall, vol. i. p. 432.

service of Artemis in her temple at Ephesus. No wonder that it drew upon itself the veneration of the whole world. The sun, it was said, in his course saw nothing more impressive than the temple of Ephesian Artemis. Its fame was enhanced by the fact that a large portion of the wealth of Asia was lodged within its inviolable walls; and it was to the cities of Asia what the Bank of England is to the modern world. The temple, whose remains are now to be seen within a few minutes' walk of the railway station of Ayasaluk, was the last of eight which stood on the same site, the previous building having been set on fire by the fanatic Herostratus the night that Alexander the Great was born. The architect of this — the latest and most magnificent — was Dinocrates, the favourite architect of Alexander the Great, the same who laid out the city of Alexandria, and who proposed to carve Mount Athos into a statue of his royal patron. St John must often have gazed upon the stately proportions of the temple of Artemis during his closing years at Ephesus, and may have taken his figure of the "pillar in the temple of my God" from its splendid columns. St Paul may have thought of it when he wrote to the Ephesians, and spoke of the Church as "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord"; and when he wrote to Timothy and spoke of the Church of the living God as "the pillar and ground of the truth"; and when he wrote to him again that "in a great house there

are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour and some to dishonour."

The temple stood till the city of Ephesus was sacked by the Goths in 262 A.D., when it was plundered and set fire to. Before another hundred years had passed the Emperor Constantine had decreed that heathen temples should be shut and all sacrifices discontinued. And now for fifteen or sixteen centuries the ruins of Diana's Temple have been held by the marshes which have swallowed up the low-lying parts of the ancient city. So late as 1862 an accomplished English architect, who had spent some years in obtaining measurements and drawings, was constrained to write: "It is wonderful that buildings which, from their magnitude and grandeur, were once considered as marvels, should not only have passed away but have left even their very site unknown." In the following year, 1863, Mr J. T. Wood, Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, obtained a firman from the Turkish Government, through the influence of the British Museum authorities, and commenced extensive excavations in search of the long-lost temple. For years this indefatigable explorer toiled with a perseverance and a skill rare even in the annals of exploration, and on New Year's Day 1870 the site of the Temple of Diana was discovered beyond the possibility of doubt. For four years more the unwearied explorer searched the spot for treasure-trove, which he found in friezes, columns, capitals, and coins in abundance. It was a great feat the

recovery of the remains of the lost Temple of Diana. There was in the process recovered the Ephesus of the Apostolic age; for in the numerous inscriptions, now so happily rescued and so worthily given to the world, are to be found materials for a picture of the social and religious life of Ephesus which could not be presented before.

It is by this picture that we are able to test the accuracy of the narrative of St Luke in the nineteenth chapter of Acts. As has been indicated, in the earlier years of the Christian era the worship of Diana seemed immovably established in Ephesus, and her honour secure among the multitudes of Western Asia. The town-clerk of the city (γραμματεύς), as he is called,—better, perhaps, the chief magistrate,—expressed the proper pride of every Ephesian citizen when he said, "What man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper," literally rendered temple-sweeper (νεωκόρος), "of the great goddess Diana, and of the image which fell down from Jupiter?" And yet, as he spoke, the influences were already at work which were slowly to undermine, and by-and-by to bring to nought, a worship so deeply rooted and so extensively spread abroad. St Paul had come to Ephesus and was preaching to its idolatrous and corrupt inhabitants that "they be no gods which are made with hands." St Paul could proclaim this doctrine with perfect impunity. Under the impartial rule of Rome religious equality flourished everywhere; the introduction of a new god or the proclamation of a new religion was to Rome a matter of supreme indifference. It was not

on its purely religious side that Christianity came into conflict with the power of Rome. When the emperors became deified, and their worship was set up throughout the empire, as it was in the Augusteum at Ephesus, and temples and religious rites were established in their honour, then the followers of Jesus were liable to persecution and to death, because their refusal to worship the emperor was regarded as treason against the State. The choice offered to Polycarp a century later than St Paul's day was between the worship of the emperor and the worship of Christ; there could have been, under the laws of the empire as administered in St Paul's day, no choice between Diana and Christ, to bring the faithful follower of Jesus to the judgment-seat or to the stake. St Paul incurred no danger so long as he appeared before the authorities as the rhetorician or the philosopher. But there was a power in his teaching which belonged to no master of ancient philosophies. As he spoke of Jesus and the resurrection, and opened up to the weary votaries of pleasure the true nobility of life in Christ, the worshippers of Diana found something for the deeper craving of their spirits which their goddess could never offer. And so not only in Ephesus, but in the country round, the allegiance of the adherents of Diana was shaken, and followers were won to Christ.

The mere transference of a few adherents from the one to the other would probably have passed without profoundly disturbing the philosophic calm which the bulk of the citizens maintained, but the demand for silver shrines fell off. These were little

models in silver of the great Temple of Diana, of which specimens in *terra cotta* have survived, and are to be seen in museums: they may have been, for the point is not absolutely beyond dispute, small statuettes reproducing in silver the figure of the goddess preserved in the sanctuary of the temple. At any rate they had been much in demand, partly as remembrancers of their visit to the pilgrims who flocked to the temple, and partly as objects to be dedicated to her on the occasion. The sale of these objects was a source of gain to the silversmiths, who formed an influential and wealthy guild in Ephesus, and the decline of their profits from the falling off in the demand roused their indignation against St Paul as the author of the revolution that had been slowly going on. Their first thought was their pockets, and their second thought the dishonour done to the goddess: "So that not only this our craft is in danger to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised" (Acts xix. 27). The outcome of their indignation was the riot so graphically described in the latter half of the nineteenth chapter of the Acts. The leader of this movement, so entirely in keeping with the selfishness of human nature, was "a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines for Diana."

Now it is a very remarkable circumstance — whether we call it only a coincidence, or whether we go the length of regarding it as an identification —that on one of the marbles found by Mr J. T. Wood at Ephesus, there is an inscription bearing this very name, Demetrius. Canon Hicks has

given reasons to make the identification probable, if not certain. Demetrius was a name as common in Ephesus in the first century as John Smith is among us to-day, and the mere coincidence of names goes for little. But by evidence which is weighty, if not conclusive, it is shown that the inscription belongs to the first century, and of the years of the first century to the year 57 A.D., when the riot took place in Ephesus. The inscription itself, according to a very likely completion of what is lacking, is to the honour of the temple-wardens of a particular year. There were two temple-wardens appointed from each of the six tribes, by annual election in the popular assembly, and their office was to take care of the fabric of the temple, to supervise the inscriptions that might be set up, and also take charge of the revenues.[1] Of this body in this particular year Demetrius was the president. So we infer from the fact that it is called the board of Demetrius's year, and that he is mentioned first on the list as representing "the Ephesine tribe." There is, in fact, complete accord between the position of Demetrius in the inscription and the account of Demetrius in the Acts. In the inscription he is a temple-warden (*νεοποιός*); in the Acts he is a silversmith who made silver shrines of Diana (*ποιῶν ναούς*). In the inscription he occupies a position of high responsibility in connection with the temple; in the Acts he is evidently a citizen of influence—the leading man in his craft, and jealous for the honour of the goddess. Nothing could be more natural than that he should head a

[1] Hicks, Ancient Greek Inscriptions, p. 80.

movement inspired at once by regard for the vested interests of the silversmiths' trade, and by concern for the honour of the goddess whose temple was for the time in the keeping of himself and his colleagues.

In St Luke's account of the riot we read of the intervention of certain individuals called in King James's Version "the chief of Asia," and in the Revised Version, with a vagueness evidently begotten of perplexity, "the chief officers of Asia." "The Asiarchs," to keep close to their Greek designation, have been one of the puzzles, and almost the despair, of commentators. But it is now certain that these officials were the high priests of the worship offered to the Roman emperors within the province of Asia. The cities of the province joined together in an association for the worship of the emperors, and the head of the association was styled high priest and Asiarch. In this capacity he had to furnish every year funds for the celebration of the provincial games in honour of the Cæsars. In one of the inscriptions under review the Asiarch is described as high priest of the associated Temple of Asia at Ephesus; and the Temple to the Cæsars at Ephesus, called the Augusteum, was discovered by Mr Wood within the precincts of the Temple of Diana. This proves the absence of any hostility between the cults, and it is a strong confirmation of this to learn, on the authority of Professor Ramsay, that the priesthood of Diana was not unfrequently a stepping-stone to the high-priesthood of the imperial worship. It is significant of the position St Paul had won for himself in Ephesus to find

these officers interposing for the safety of the apostle.

An official who appears at the critical moment of the riot, and who has passed into a proverb for cautious advice, is "the town-clerk." He is mentioned again and again in these inscriptions, and occupies, as we have said, the dignity rather of "chief magistrate." In one case mentioned, the person described as "town-clerk" filled also the office of Asiarch, showing that he was a man of consideration and wealth. Another class of officials referred to by the "town-clerk" in his appeal to the mob are "the deputies," the direct representatives of Roman power, who were wont to lay a strong hand upon communities given to tumult and riot. It is a proof of St Luke's scrupulous exactitude that he uses here the word descriptive of the precise office held by the deputy at Ephesus (ἀνθύπατος). Some provinces had for their administrators or deputies "proconsuls," others proprætors or legates. These latter were appointed by the emperor, while the former were appointed by the Roman Senate. As a matter of fact, however, there were constant changes in the patronage of these appointments, according as the provinces were senatorial or imperial; and it required contemporary knowledge to say whether at a given time a particular province was governed by a proconsul or a proprætor.[1] Asia and Africa were at this time administered by proconsuls, and were the prizes among the senatorial provinces. In the newly discovered inscriptions there are frequent references to the

[1] See Mommsen's 'Provinces of the Roman Empire.'

proconsul as the governor of the province of Asia and the supreme administrator of the law.

Yet another term employed by the "town-clerk" receives illustration in the inscriptions—the expression "temple-sweeper," already mentioned. It is here that a direct example of the term as applied to Diana is for the first time found. It had evidently been the usual expression to describe the city and people of Ephesus in relation to Diana, but when the worship of the Roman emperors was set up in Ephesus and other cities of Asia, it was employed to express in the same way their devotion to the Cæsars. In one of the inscriptions the city of the Ephesians is described as "twice temple-sweeper of the Cæsars, according to the decrees of the Senate, and temple-sweeper of Diana."

These illustrations, which might be multiplied, bear witness to the marvellous accuracy of St Luke as a historian. We shall mention in conclusion a remarkable indication of the decline of paganism which is furnished by the site of ancient Ephesus. It is contained in an inscription which covered the whole of the eastern wall of the southern entrance to the Great Theatre.[1] It consists of a series of documents, chiefly relating to a number of gold and silver images, weighing from three to seven pounds each, which were voted to Artemis, and ordered to be placed in her temple by a wealthy Roman and naturalised citizen of Ephesus named Caius Vibius Salutaris. He gave also a sum of money, amounting apparently to £835, bearing 9 per cent, to be an endowment for keeping the images

[1] Ancient Greek Inscriptions from Ephesus, p. 135.

clean and in good order. On a certain day of assembly in the theatre—viz., 25th May, which was the birthday of the goddess—these images were to be carried in procession from the temple to the theatre by the priests, accompanied by a staff-bearer and guards, and to be met at the Magnesian Gate by the young men of the city, who from that point would take part and help to carry the images to the theatre. The inscription belongs to 104 A.D., and seems to have been a last effort of expiring paganism to prop up the falling honour of Artemis. An inscription of date 160 A.D. contains a decree stating that the Ephesian goddess was now being set at naught in her own native city; so that similar neglect might be expected to be shown in other places.[1] It proves that paganism had received a deadly wound, and it is an involuntary confession by the votaries of Artemis that her worship was going down before the Gospel.

Thus have we the stones crying out to vindicate and illustrate such an important book of Holy Scripture as the Acts of the Apostles; and when we remember that the author of it is one of the evangelists, recording the teaching and the works of Jesus Christ, we are grateful for the testimony to his character for accuracy which is furnished by newly-discovered inscriptions.

In closing these Lectures, I may be allowed to express the conviction that, important as have been the results gained by Sacred Archæology in the present century, and indeed within the last forty

[1] Professor Ramsay, 'Dictionary of the Bible,' art. "Ephesus," disputes this, and believes there is an error in this part of the inscription.

or fifty years, there is a richer harvest still awaiting the cultivator of this fascinating domain. There may be, in consequence of fresh light, new readings of incidents and episodes of the sacred history; the Bible may have to be studied in a new context; but there is no need to tremble for the Ark of God. "The Word of God liveth and abideth for ever," and "we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth," even that truth which is able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I. (pp. 6, 26, 92).

It is to the excavations of Professor Flinders Petrie at Ballas and Negada, on the west bank of the Nile, a little below ancient Thebes, that we owe the first hints which have led to what seems a conclusive settlement of this important point. The explorer examined in the vast Necropolis here three thousand tombs, in which he discovered objects so unusual—greenish plates of slate, many of them in curious animal forms—that he was disposed to attribute them to a foreign people, probably the Libyans, who had temporarily resided in Egypt between the Old and the Middle Kingdoms. He called them the New Race. His theory did not meet with acceptance, and the opinion was expressed that this unusual art belonged to a time before the ascertained beginnings of Egyptian culture.

Meanwhile the French scholar, E. Amélineau, excavating at Abydos, 1895-96 and 1896-97, had also discovered objects which could not be arranged in the known development of Egyptian art, and which he ascribes to the dynasties of the demigods who, according to Egyptian traditions, reigned before the kings. This view met also with opposition, but happily among the materials excavated were inscriptions, rude enough, yet showing that the people buried in the tombs had known the hieroglyphic system of writing. Moreover the occurrence of Horus-names or Banner-names—every old Egyptian king had among his other names a name sur-

mounted by the picture of a hawk and written on a sort of standard — show that the Abydos objects were to be placed in the earliest period of Egyptian history. Renewed excavations at Negada brought to light pottery and tablets like those found by Professor Petrie, and also in the same tomb objects existing like those discovered by Amélineau. It was shown by the excavations of M. de Morgan that the tombs at Negada and at Abydos belonged to the oldest period of Egyptian history before the 3rd dynasty. When the Horus-name of the king, which had been overlooked at first, was found on one of the principal objects of the royal tomb at Negada, the possibility of a solution of a great riddle was opened up. The sign with the syllabic value *Mn* gave the name of Menes, and the conclusion is that in Negada we have the tomb of the oldest king of Egypt known to history, and the king regarded by the Egyptians as the founder of the Egyptian monarchy.

De Morgan produces evidence to show that Menes and the dynastic Egyptians were of Babylonian origin (Recherches sur les Origines de l'Égypte—Ethnographie préhistorique et Tombeau royal de Négadah, pp. 19-21). According to him, Menes and the dynastic Egyptians brought with them part of the language, the art of writing, metals, brick-making, measures, cylinders, seals, certain animals, cereals, and burial customs.

Miss Pirie tells me that at Hieracoupolis, which was excavated in 1897-98 by Mr J. E. Quibell, and where she had the good fortune to be working, the diggers found a wonderful store of objects belonging to the first three dynasties, including some monuments and a large inscription in stone of one of the kings recently found at Abydos, and several kings previously unknown. Specially noticeable was a large slate palette covered with sculpture, representing a new king—Nar-Mer—going out in triumph after subduing some part of North Egypt. The features show a very marked difference between conqueror and conquered. Thus the blanks of the first three dynasties are getting filled up, but as yet no sequence has been established. A few kings can be assigned their exact place, but as regards most, all we can

say is that they belong to one or other of the three dynasties.

See Flinders Petrie, 'Negada and Ballas'; Amélineau, 'Les Nouvelles Fouilles d'Abydos'; De Morgan, 'Recherches sur les Origines de l'Egypte'; Dr Ludwig Borchardt, 'New York Independent,' March 31, 1898.

NOTE II. (pp. 19, 164).

The 'Times' of April 14, 1898, contained a notice of an important discovery in Western Thebes. It had long been known, from the fact of relics of Amenophis II. being offered for sale, that the tomb of this monarch had been found by the Arabs. M. Loret (the Director of the Department of Antiquities at Cairo), acting upon information he had obtained, visited Thebes, and found the royal tomb. His discovery is of special interest, because the mummy of the king was found in the sarcophagus just as it had been originally deposited, — a fact unique in exploration. The sarcophagus of sandstone is artificially coloured a bright rose red, and is placed upon a massive block of alabaster; within, decorated with wreaths and garlands of flowers, lay the body of Amenophis II. of the 18th dynasty, who lived, according to Flinders Petrie ('Hist. of Egypt,' vol. ii. p. 152 ff.), 1449-1423 B.C., and was the son of the great conqueror Thothmes III. In a small chamber to the right of the sepulchral hall were found the mummies of seven other Egyptian kings—viz., Thothmes IV. and Amenophis III., the immediate successors of the owner of the tomb; Seti II., or Merenptah, the reputed Pharaoh of the Exodus, and Set-Necht, both of the 19th dynasty; and Rameses IV., VI., and VIII., of the 20th dynasty. The royal mummies were most probably placed here for preservation about the time when the royal mummies discovered in 1881 were concealed near Deir-el-Bahari. (Pollard's 'Land of the Monuments,' second edition, pp. ix, x.)

NOTE III. (p. 72).

At the Eleventh International Congress of Orientalists held in Paris in September 1897, Father Scheil exhibited a fragment of a terra-cotta tablet of great interest, nothing less than a new version of the Babylonian account of the Deluge. It came from Abu Habba, the ancient city of Sippara: the colophon, or subscription, tells that it was the tenth chapter in a story which had for its title "When the man rested." The name of the scribe is Ellit-Aya, and it is known that Aya was the goddess consort of Shamash, and that this divine couple had their principal seat in Sippara. He dates the text "the 28th day of the month Sebat, in the year when King Ammizaduga built the fortress of Ammizadugaki at the mouth of the Euphrates," which gives us approximately 2140 B.C. The tablet is in a very fragmentary condition; but there is enough preserved to tell about a deluge, and about Ramman, the God of Storms, punishing the human race. Safety, moreover, is to be secured by means of a ship, the oar being particularly mentioned, put into the hands of Pir-napisti, the Seed of Life, the Babylonian Noah. Here too Adramkhasis appears, as in other versions of the Deluge story. Father Scheil concludes from his decipherment and study of the fragment that it contains a portion of the Sippara version of the Deluge story, and that this account, poetic in its construction, is only a copy from an original, resting upon a historic fact centuries previous. So far, however, from the story being preserved from generation to generation without change even in the form of a single word, this version differs in detail both from Berosus and from the other Babylonian account discovered by George Smith. It is, at any rate, a poetical story of the Flood seven centuries before Moses, and given in such a way as to show that different cities had different poetical editions of the same event. Professor Morris Jastrow of the University of Pennsylvania, on a careful examination of Scheil's fragment, points out considerations that greatly add to the probability that the

Hebrews carried the story with them when they first left Mesopotamia for the West. See 'New York Independent,' February 10 and 17, 1898.

NOTE IV. (p. 107).

Professor Peters calls attention to the similarity existing in certain particulars between the temple of Bel at Nippur and the temple of Jehovah at Jerusalem. "It seems to me the Jewish, Phœnician, and Syrian temples, as we find them described in the Bible and other ancient sources, are in origin similar to the ziggurat temple such as we have it at Nippur. The Holy of Holies corresponds to the mysterious shrine on the summit of the ziggurat; the Holy Place corresponds to the ziggurat proper; outside of this is the altar of burnt offerings; the face of the temple is towards the east or south-east; and the temple is so arranged that one ascends constantly, the most holy portion being the highest. I do not mean that the Jewish temple at all resembles in its outward appearance the temple of Bel at Nippur. It had been developed far beyond that stage. It had its origin, however, in similar ideas regarding the nature of the divinity and the place and manner in which he should be worshipped; and to understand thoroughly the meaning of the Jewish temple and the method of its worship, we must study precisely such a temple as E-Kur, the house of En-Lil, the Storm-god at Nippur—the oldest temple of which we have any record, and one which exercised a profound influence on the religious development of Assyria and Babylonia, and, through them, of the whole Semitic world."—'Nippur,' vol. ii. p. 169.

NOTE V. (p. 123).

Mr L. W. King in his newly published volume says: "Although Chedorlaomer's name has not yet been identified in any Babylonian inscription, there is no reason at all why it should not be found in one. . . . So far as the composi-

tion of the name is concerned, there is no reason why the inscriptions should not contain a reference to Chedorlaomer, King of Elam. Moreover, Elam at the period of the 1st dynasty was the chief foe of Babylonia, and, until finally defeated by Khammurabi, had for many years been the predominant power in Western Asia. The state of affairs at this period, therefore, may without difficulty be harmonised with the events described in Gen. xiv., and it would not be surprising if the name of Kudur-Lugamar, or Chedorlaomer, should be found as that of a king of Elam in an inscription of the Old Babylonian period. Up to the present time, however, no such discovery has been made."—Letters and Inscriptions of Khammurabi, pp. lv, lvi of Preface.

NOTE VI. (p. 127).

At the meeting of the British Association in 1898, Professor Flinders Petrie gave a popular lecture on "Egypt under the First Three Dynasties in the Light of Recent Discoveries." We quote from the summary which appeared in the 'Times,' September 14:—

"His object," he said, "was to give a summary of the principal discoveries during the last five years that had revealed the rise of Egyptian civilisation. It had been said that the beginning of the fourth Egyptian dynasty—the age of the Pyramids, about 4000 B.C.—was the farthest back we could go. The puzzle was that there had been no trace of this high civilisation. But now entirely new discoveries during the last three years at Koptos, Negada, Abydos, and Hieracoupolis, and various excavations, had discovered remains belonging to the ages before 4000 B.C., which had hitherto been the starting-point of known history. Beginning with the Libyan stock, with some negro mixture, which occupied Egypt in its earliest civilisation, he showed some of the objects he had found at Negada—statuettes, games, slate palettes for grinding paint, beautifully ribbed flint knives of extreme delicacy, forked lances and arrows, carved spoons of ivory and bone, harpoons, bracelets, and

combs. These were at first temporarily assigned to a new race, as we knew nothing more about them; but now they could be safely assigned to the pre-dynastic stock about 5000 B.C., and even earlier. In the graves of this aboriginal race were found bowls of black clay with patterns imprinted upon them. They were of great importance in considering the relation of this civilisation to that of others in the Mediterranean. In each of the countries where this had been found—Spain, Bosnia, Egypt, and Hissarlik—it was contemporary with the introduction of metals. Metals had just been introduced, and therefore in all cases this pottery was associated with the same state of civilisation."

NOTE VII. (p. 140).

One note of Egypticity conspicuously lacking from the history and legislation of the Pentateuch is any direct reference to the immortality of the soul or the future life. When we observe to what an extent the idea of a life beyond death, of the resurrection of the body, and of judgment pervaded the thought and the conduct of the ancient Egyptians, it is remarkable that no direct reference to that circle of subjects should be found in the Books of Moses. It was along a higher plane that the teaching of Revelation on this subject was to be unfolded, from the conception of God as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—"not the God of the dead but of the living, for all live unto Him," as our Lord argued against the Sadducees of His day. At any rate, it is impossible to found an argument on the silence of the Pentateuch for a later date. Whatever the explanation of the silence of the Books of Moses on the subject, such silence would have been, so far as we can judge, impossible in the times of the Exile to which so much of the Pentateuch is relegated by the Higher Critics. By that time the doctrine of immortality had taken a much firmer hold and was much more distinctly affirmed. In the Psalms and Prophecies of the Exilic and post-Exilic time, the faith in personal immortality becomes much more clear and impressive, and had

the legislation called by the name of Moses originated then, it would surely have been coloured to some extent by that belief.—See Bishop Welldon, 'The Hope of Immortality,' p. 79; and Ancessi, 'Job et l'Egypte: Le Redempteur et la Vie future,' p. 79 ff.

NOTE VIII. (p. 301).

The following particulars are added from Professor Burton's valuable monograph. The earliest observed and best known of all the Politarch inscriptions (No. I. of Professor Burton), the only one known or generally acknowledged, down almost to the present time, was obtained from the inside of the arch which, till 1876, spanned the Via Egnatia at its western entrance into Thessalonica. In the year mentioned the arch was taken down. Through the efforts of the Rev. Peter Crosbie,—who has been for forty years resident in Salonica, and whose long and intimate knowledge of the antiquities of the city is always at the service of travellers and scholars,—seconded by Mr Blunt, the late consul (father of Mr J. E. Blunt, the present consul), the stone which contained the inscription, with the exception of five letters, was rescued, and being removed first to the British Consulate was afterwards conveyed to the British Museum, where it now is. It has been again and again copied and reproduced, but being undated there is no certainty as to its age. It has been held to commemorate the battle of Philippi, 44 B.C., but this is pure conjecture. It is most likely later than 30 B.C., and may be as late as 143 A.D. The next inscription (No. II. of Professor Burton) is definitely assigned by its own text to the reign of Augustus, and mentions five politarchs. Another inscription (No. VI. of Professor Burton) is of special interest because of its date, 46 A.D., less than a decade before St Paul came first to Macedonia. It knows of only two politarchs, and the explanation of this no doubt is that it is not a Thessalonica inscription, but was brought from the site of ancient Pella. The marble slab containing it is still in Thessalonica, but a photograph of the inscription,

sent by Mr Crosbie to Dean Stanley, is now in the British Museum. The oldest of these inscriptions containing a date within itself (No. VII. of Professor Burton) belongs, as is calculated, to 117 B.C. It was found at a village four hours' north of Thessalonica.

"It thus appears," says Professor Burton, "that we have definite monumental evidence that Thessalonica had politarchs from the reign of Augustus to that of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius, or in round numbers from the beginning of the first century to the middle of the second. . . . As respects the number of politarchs in any city, Thessalonica had five in the reign of Augustus and six in that of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius. It is probably safe to assume that it had either five or six in the New Testament period."

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